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ABSTRACT

This publication contains ten articles concerning the development of human resources in rural areas. It focuses on a broad perspective of rural adult education and the issues facing those who wish to serve rural areas. The articles and their authors are: "Rural Adults and Postsecondary Education" (Jacqueline D. Spears and others); "The Rural Adult: A Portrait of Characteristics, Needs and Styles" (Roger S. McCannon); "Rural Education from a Native American Perspective" (Jacques Seronde); "School-Based Enterprises: Rural Education through Action Learning" (Paul F. DeLargy); "Creating a Rural Mandate: Impacting Institutional and State Policies" (William H. Gray); "The Community Education Model: Learning Opportunities for Rural Adults" (Dawn Ramsey); "Adults and Higher Education: Bridging the Culture Gap" (Maurice Olivier); "The Rural Free University and the Cooperative Extension Service" (Jim Killacky); "Rural Isolation: The Need for Information" (S. L. Ward); and "The Partnership for Rural Improvement: An Approach to Inter-Institutional Outreach" (Robert H. McDaniel and Ralph A. Loomis). (ALL)

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Introduction

Contrasted with other fields in American education, rural adult education is still an emerging discipline. Tracing its roots back nearly a century to the development of land-grant universities and the introduction of the Cooperative Extension Service, the field of rural adult education has become increasingly diverse. Rural schools, community development corporations, colleges and universities, grassroots organizations, rural libraries - these and many other organizations provide educational service to rural areas. While they differ in mission, in style, and perhaps in approach, they share an immense concern and respect for rural areas.

With the support of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), the Action Agenda Project has spent the past three years exploring this field - asking what, within the discipline of adult education, is special about rural and what, within the discipline of rural education, is special about adults. In many respects we've come away with more questions than we've answered. Examined from the perspective of rural empowerment, education takes on meaning that expands far beyond classrooms and degrees. Distinctions between education and information, secondary and postsecondary, formal and informal, credit and non-credit fade when we confront the issue of how the educational resources of a nation can be extended in support of rural people.

It is in this spirit of concern for the development of human resources in rural areas that the articles in this issue have been collected. Our hope is that they enable you to see rural education from a broader perspective and that you come away with a better understanding of the issues and concerns that face those who wish to serve rural areas. If you would like more information on the project or would like to join us in our efforts, please write.

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educational considerations

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PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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Rural Adults and Post-secondary Education

by Jacqueline D. Spears, Sue C. Maes and Gwen Bailey

Approximately one-fourth of those involved in adult learning live in rural areas. With the support of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), the Action Agenda Project has spent the past three years exploring the educational resources that serve this population. What we wish to share is a synthesis of current writing in the field, some exploratory research conducted on programs, and the insights shared by some 200 participants at regional conferences on rural adult education held throughout the country this past year.

Before examining the state of the art in rural adult education, we need to make a few introductory remarks about the diverse disciplines from which rural adult education has evolved and the tensions this diversity has spawned. As a distinct discipline, rural adult education draws together practitioners from both higher education and public school education, from both service and academic traditions, from both formal institutions and informal grassroots organizations, from both professional and occupational education, from both rural improvement and economic development concerns. In the face of such diversity, it seems hardly surprising that multiple viewpoints emerge.

In a sense each provider sees rural America through a different lens. Seen through the lens offered by cooperative extension and community development corporations, rural adults need the knowledge required to create an economic base and provide basic services required to sustain a community. Seen through the lens offered by colleges and universities, rural adults offer a new market to help compensate for declining enrollments. Seen through the lens offered by the public schools, rural adults are a generation of Americans shortchanged - a generation whose lack of basic skills inhibit their own and their children's development. Seen through the lens offered by grassroots organizations, rural adults articulate interests and needs that remain unmet or misunderstood by traditional educational organizations. Seen through the lens offered by supporters of the lifelong learning movement, rural adults are a segment of the population isolated by virtue of distance or topography from the educational services they will continue to demand throughout their lives.

These multiple images create some tensions or ambiguities that must be acknowledged at the outset. Providers and researchers alike differ with regard to whose interests are to be served, what unit to consider in evaluating need and what criteria to use in judging educational quality. Issues related to whose interests are to be served and what unit is to be considered are related. Issues of educational quality remain a concern for adult education in general.

Historically, rural adult education addressed the needs of agrarian communities. In addition to increasing the agricultural output of the nation, cooperative extension networks sought to strengthen and preserve rural communities. The "rural turnaround" that resulted from the urban outmigration in the 1970s has led many to predict that distinctions between rural and urban may fade by the turn of the century (Treadway, 1984). Educational providers remain divided between concerns for preserving rural communities and lifestyles and desires to facilitate what they see to be the inevitable urbanization of rural life. Related to this is an ambiguity regarding the unit of analysis. Traditional institutions typically survey the needs of individuals in designing educational services. Some grassroots and community organizations analyze the community as a whole, arguing that the welfare of the individual depends on the health of the community. Historically, land-grant colleges and cooperative extension networks were designed to address a national need for increased agricultural production. Educational providers remain divided on the unit of analysis - individual, community or nation - which best serves the needs of rural areas.

Finally, issues of quality loom ever large. Adult education in general faces concerns with quality assessment of both credit and non-credit courses. Of late, attention has been focused on assuring quality in credit courses (Cross and McCartan, 1984). Questions of quality assume yet another dimension when viewed through the lens offered by grassroots organizations. Tax dollars flow through credentialed institutions and student aid is tied to degree-seeking goals. Yet frills, like cake decorating, can turn into successful business ventures, illiteracy can sometimes be conquered more easily away from the classroom, and an experienced small business owner can provide more valuable information than a fully accredited business administration course. Issues of credit and degrees pale in comparison with the pressing needs for rural empowerment.

Educational Providers and Programs

Educational practice in rural adult education can be described as diverse - diverse in provider, content and method of delivery. In a survey of model programs in rural adult postsecondary education, Karen Hone (1985) described continuing education programs, community college programs, job training programs, professional development programs, community education programs, adult basic education programs, rural focused curricula and community development programs. Sponsoring agencies include four-year colleges and universities, governmental agencies, nonprofit associations and organizations, private schools, regional libraries, research institutes, state departments of education, student cooperatives, community colleges, vocational-technical institutes and variety of consortial arrangements. In the wake of such diversity, we can only hope to offer a brief sketch of educational practice in rural adult education and draw some generalizations from their successes.

By virtue of longevity alone, the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has been an acknowledged leader in rural adult education. While their programs have focused traditionally on agriculture, the CES in some states have ex-

Jacqueline D. Spears, Sue C. Maes, and Gwen Bailey are the project staff for the Action Agenda Project, a federally funded project working in the field of rural adult postsecondary education.

panded their programs to encompass a broader mission. In Iowa, the CES offers a series of programs and services directed at the economic development of communities. Idaho has involved their CES in offering a computer literacy course in rural communities. Kentucky's CES has established the SOS Learning Network, a system of community learning and development programs in 16 communities. Thousands of Kentuckians have become SOS teachers/learners, spreading nonformal learning throughout the state. With a staff in excess of 18,000 operating in 3150 counties in the United States (Killacky, 1984), CES provides states with a valuable resource for serving rural adults.

Colleges and universities have developed a variety of strategies to reach rural areas. Having been formed with a mandate for community service, community colleges often act as primary educational providers in rural areas. Some offer mobile programs in industrial arts, career education, dental hygiene - circulating equipment throughout the regions they serve. Others coordinate a series of regional centers, offering rural areas access to low cost postsecondary education. Continuing education programs at colleges and universities offer a variety of outreach services. Some offer technical services to the businesses and industries in their areas. Others extend a variety of formal and nonformal programs to area residents. Some take advantage of technology to deliver educational services to remote sites. Among the more comprehensive models based on technology is that offered by the University of Alaska. Serving 250 communities of which only 30 are accessible by road, the University of Alaska provides programs broadcast through the LERN Alaska Instructional Network, the Audio-Conferencing Network and Teletext systems.

Community based organizations are yet another category of educational providers serving rural areas. These programs are more difficult to locate, primarily because they operate on shoestring budgets and a long list of volunteers. But their impact in rural communities is substantial. Taking advantage of resources from within the community, these programs are successful in linking community resources and in acting as a catalyst for other community development activities. In many communities, these locally initiated organizations offer the swiftest means of getting information and help to rural adults. More than other educational providers working in rural areas, community based organizations reflect rural community needs to gain some control over their lives and their futures.

Given the importance that economic development plays in the very survival of rural communities, we could not complete our quick survey of rural adult education without highlighting some of the more innovative models. Nowhere is the integration of education and community development more obvious than in attempts to foster economic development in rural areas. Traditional educational providers, like colleges and universities, have been successful in offering courses in entrepreneurship or technical assistance to small busineses. But in some regions of the United States, the barriers of economic development have been so long-standing and persistent that more integrated models have been developed. Community development corporations like the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) take on the role of change agent, incorporating the analysis and training functions provided by educational institutions with the seed monies necessary to introduce incremental change into the local economy. School-based enterprises offer another innovative model for promoting the economic development of rural communities. These programs foster economic growth through business enterprises initiated by schools. The enterprises serve a dual function - offering a practical environment in which to teach skills and providing the local community with a needed service.

While the models serving rural areas are diverse in content, organization and purpose, Hone (1985) attempted to identify some characteristics common to those models that have been most successful. Three of those characteristics include: (1) response to a specific societal need, (2) response to the adult learner's expectations, and (3) extensive cooperation with other agencies.

Successful programs seem to literally grow out of the community. The link between purpose and product is tight, responding to a specific need embraced by the community as a whole. Community members take an active role in shaping the programs developed and controlling the outside resources called upon. This close connection between need and educational product is, in part, what has led to the diversity of educational providers in rural areas. Community based organizations are often successful because their origins lie deep in the communities they serve. More traditional educational providers can also be effective, once they join hands with the community as willing partners in the educational process. The programs most successful are the programs "owned" by the rural community.

Successful programs respect adult autonomy and cultural differences. At the very least, the program recognizes and respects the values and lifestyles of rural people. In rural communities where many cultures coexist, successful programs respect the differences that exist among cultures. Programs that address the learner's expectations, that accommodate adult lifestyles and responsibilities, and that share control over content and method with the learners are also more likely to be successful. They embrace the belief that adults inherently have the capacity to learn and solve their own problems - they need only the proper resources.

Policy Concerns

Ultimately, policy issues are tied to outcomes in financing and funding. Financing and funding are major barriers to those wanting to serve rural areas. Rural adult education can be addressed either through rural policy or adult education policy. A review of both fields raises a number of issues of concern to rural adult educators.

The Lifelong Learning Act passed as part of the 1976 Higher Education Amendments lent credibility and visibility to adult education imperatives, but appropriated very little money (Cross and McCartan, 1984). Press releases regarding input solicited for later hearings on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act gave testimony to the considerable input provided by adult education advocates, but offer little encouragement that these suggestions will actually be implemented (Palmer, 1985). The Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner (1984) has outlined specific suggestions aimed at increasing federal support of adult education programs and reducing financial barriers to adult learners. Similarly the National University Continuing Education Association has offered revisions designed to strengthen aid offered to postsecondary institutions which take on the task of serving adult learners.

However, in all these deliberations little distinction is made between urban and rural learners. Concern for the problems of rural adult learners are addressed primarily through proposals to support the development of innovative delivery mechanisms. To the extent that these proposals remove barriers and offer support equally to rural and urban

learners, they are supportive to rural adult education. To the extent that they continue a long tradition of volume-driven funding, these proposals ignore fundamental issues regarding equity of access in the wake of increased costs to deliver services to rural areas. To the extent that they offer disproportionate support to formal educational institutions, they ignore the fact that rural needs may not be amenable to solutions posed by traditional institutions. Without wanting to dilute the solidarity forged on behalf of adult learners, it is important to remember the extent to which an urban bias has dominated in the past.

The past decade has witnessed a resurgence of interest in rural problems, but those knowledgeable about federal policy express frustration with fragmented efforts. Treadway (1984) speaks to the need for a federal policy that distinguishes between rural and urban learners, specifically in issues regarding equity and appropriateness. Current federal criteria for allocating resources ignore the higher costs of delivering services to rural areas and overestimate the local resources available to support such services. Nearly all concerned with rural development speak to the need for a federal policy that recognizes the extent to which adult education must be integrated into community development. Blakely (1983) calls for a rural policy based on the development of human resources, not natural resources. Isolating educational policy from rural policy is to ignore the interrelationships between human resources and rural development.

Because of widespread differences among states and institutions, it is difficult to generalize about state and institutional policies affecting rural adult education. But many of the concerns in traditional education institutions can be lumped into two categories: (1) the volume-driven model by which educational programs are funded and (2) the stand-alone model within which most adult education and outreach efforts must operate.

Most state funds are allocated to institutions and institutional funds to programs on a per student-credit-hour basis. This allocation procedure is urban biased, motivating institutions to offer services in urban areas where the applicant pool is large and the costs are relatively small. This is exacerbated by state or institutional policies that require adult education or outreach efforts be self-supporting. Urban adults may have up to 50 percent of their costs covered by tax dollars while their rural counterparts foot the entire bill. In the wake of decreased federal involvement, rural providers are united in their concern that states assume responsibility for assuring that educational opportunities equal to those found in urban areas be extended to rural areas.

Another concern raised was that state policies must recognize the need for different strategies in addressing the educational needs of the already well-educated as contrasted to those who lack basic skills. State policies that encourage the use of technology and restrict duplication of programs in rural areas result in programs for the well-educated - those familiar with the educational system and aggressive in locating services. Adults who are illiterate or who lack basic skills are more easily reached through softer programs provided locally - community-based efforts, school-based programs or recreational programs. While technology can be effective in extending educational services to rural adults, states should not view it as the "rural solution."

Perhaps the most supportive role state policy can play in improving services extended to rural adults is to: (1) engage in reciprocity arrangements with neighboring states and (2) promote inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration. In some rural areas, residents are more isolated from educational resources within their states than from those in adjacent states. Out-of-state tuitions create unnecessary hardships. Reciprocal arrangements, like that between Minnesota and Wisconsin, remove this artificial barrier. Encouraging cooperation was cited as yet another way state policy could assist rural education. The range of educational providers active in rural areas reflects the diverse character of rural residents, not inefficiency. Most providers call for state policies that promote and reward inter-institutional collaboration and cooperation among educational providers rather than policies that eliminate programs under the guise that duplication is occurring.

The Special Needs of Rural Adult Education

In an effort to both summarize and synthesize the information about rural adult education, we would like to close by examining two questions. What, within the discipline of adult education, is special about rural? What, within the discipline of rural education, is special adult? It is along this boundary between existing disciplines - adult education and rural education - that the special needs of rural adults fall.

In many respects, rural adult learners share the same characteristics as urban adult learners. They prefer courses that are directly relevant to their life situations, need flexibility of scheduling and course location, respond best to content that is learner driven. But there are substantial differences. The realities of distance and isolation make services more difficult to deliver - access is severely restricted. Second, expectations are lower. Richard Margolis (1985) speaks earnestly of the "incubus of ignorance and inertia" in rural America. Having seen themselves only through urban eyes, some rural Americans have been robbed of their pride - feeling condemned to an inferior life by virtue of their rural status. The urban exodus, if it continues, will simply exacerbate the problem. Resources will be directed to the professionals, to the technologically literate, to the already well educated, to the urban outmigrants.

A third difference lies embedded in the very fabric of rural poverty. Current efforts in linking economic development and postsecondary education (See for example Charner, 1984 and Charner and Rolzinski, 1985) explore important new ground for education - yet they are dominated by urban models. Seen through the lens of rural needs, economic development models must help adults create jobs, not simply train for them. As innovative as many of the collaborative models in economic development are, they pale in comparison to the more deeply integrated models needed in rural areas. Education must chart new territory if it is to have an impact in rural areas.

What, within the field of rural education, is unique about adults? Certainly adults face the same problems of access and equity, the same need for a rural curriculum that helps them regain self-respect. What sets adults apart from young people is the characteristics of adult learners. Adults require education that is experience based, relevant to their life, at times and places manageable within adult responsibilities, and over which they have some control. Secondly, our review of successful programs suggests that no single provider is well suited for all rural communities or to serve all educational needs of a given community. Rural education must concern itself with these realities, involve these other providers in its deliberations, and explore collaborative relationships if it intends to reach the rural adult.

What is the agenda for rural adult educators? For all,

the day to day work in reaching out to rural areas, in extending educational opportunities to rural adults remains paramount. But the problems faced by rural America deepen. Perhaps traditional concepts of rural education need to give way to notions of rural empowerment. Perhaps our real concern for rural America must become the development of its human resources - using whatever form education must take.

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Early studies of rural adult learners suggested that most rural adults were interested only in recreational or avocational learning. A recent study which analyzed both regional and national demographic data suggests otherwise. This study provides us with a clearer picture of the learning needs and characteristics of rural adult learners.

The Rural Adult: A Portrait of Characteristics, Needs and Styles

by Roger S. McCannon

More recently there has been greater attention on serving the educational needs of rural adults. Life in our agripolitan countryside has become more complex and continued learning has become necessary for both occupational and personal advancement. Rural adults are turning toward education in increasing numbers as a means of improving and enriching their lives. Educational providers are attempting to meet rural adults' learning needs. Despite this new interest, most of the literature of adult postsecondary education focuses upon urban programs and urban adult learners. Less attention has been given to developing an understanding of rural adults' educational interests and needs. This study undertook the challenge of developing a statistical base of information about rural adults' educational needs, interests and participation patterns.

Background

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education reports that there is increasing participation by adults of all ages in adult education programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 1982). According to the 1981 triennial supplement to the Current Population Survey, more than 21 million adults age 17 and older participated in some form of adult education. Of this total, nearly 6 million, or 28 percent, were adults living in rural areas (see Table 1).

In his classic study, Houle (1961) determined that adult learners had three types of orientation toward learning: some were goal-oriented, others were activity-oriented, and still others were learning-oriented. Other authors (Cross, 1981; Boshier, 1977; Knox, 1976; Knowles, 1980; Tough, 1971) have found that adults enter learning situations with a particular focus that seems to fit their immediate needs. Cross (1981) reports that data from 35 large-scale state and national surveys tend to suggest that, in general, adult learners have shown increasing interest both in occupational training and in social life and recreation education. However, most of these studies were focused upon urban areas. In one large national study (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965) conducted over 20 years ago, it was concluded that rural adults were not very much interested in continuing their learning.

Table 1. Participation in Adult Education by Residential Status: 1981

Residential Status	1981	
	Number	Percent of total
RURAL		
Total Population not in MSA* (Farm and Rural Nonfarm)	52,365,000	31.6
Participants in Adult Education	5,865,000	27.6
URBAN		
Total Population in MSA*	113,464,000	68.4
Participants in Adult Education	15,387,000	72.4

*Metropolitan Statistical Area

Very few recent studies have looked either at rural adults' educational needs or at their reasons for engaging in learning activities. A study of part-time enrollment in higher education in this country in fall 1974 (Valley, 1976) found less participation in formal credit educational programs in rural states than in urban states. California had the highest percentage of part-time credit enrollment with 53.1 percent, and Iowa had the lowest at 17.6 percent. To estimate the size and focus of the adult learning force in Iowa (essentially a rural state), the Educational Testing Service conducted a study (Hamilton, 1976) which showed that an estimated 676,800 adults in Iowa wanted additional education. The results were compared with those of a national study conducted in 1972 by the Commission on Nontraditional Study. The result of the two studies are presented in Table 2. They suggest that the adults surveyed were more interested in personal satisfaction and were slightly less oriented toward vocational advancement.

Table 2. Rank Order of Adults' Focus on Learning

Reason	Iowa, 1976	Nation, 1972
To be better informed	1	1
Personal satisfaction	2	2
Improve income	3	4
Prepare for different job	4	3
Current job requirement	5	5

During the summer of 1976, the University of Minnesota conducted a survey of 3,606 households in rural western Minnesota to assess the perceived needs for education beyond high school (Copa, 1976). One conclusion drawn from the study was that adults in this rural area of Minnesota were more interested in continuing their education for personal development and self-improvement (60 percent) than they were for reasons of vocational advancement through job training (40 percent).

Between 1975 and 1982, students enrolled in evening courses at the University of Minnesota-Morris, which is lo-

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cated in rural western Minnesota, have been surveyed each quarter. When asked what was the most important reason for enrolling, 55 percent said that they attended for personal enrichment or "just for fun." Only 13 percent said that job training or professional advancement was the most important reason for enrolling. In a more recent study, Treadway (1984) concluded that rural people are looking for education that relates more immediately to their needs and has a practical consequence.

Collectively, these isolated studies do not allow one to draw hard conclusions. They suggest that, at least in the past, rural adults have selected learning activities more for reasons of personal development than for reasons of vocational advancement. However, because mandated continuing education requirements have increased for various occupations and professions in most states, this orientation may now be changing. With the increasing job growth in professional services now being found in rural areas, more individuals in many occupations will need continuing professional education.

Nature of the Study

At present, designers of rural postsecondary education programs are handicapped by a dearth of information about rural adults' educational interests, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns. That is not to say that research studies and local needs assessments have not been conducted. Rather, we have not "taken stock" and developed a base-line from which to judge improvement in our practice and upon which sound discussions and decisions can be founded. This study provides—in a profile form—more current information to assist practitioners and policy makers to better understand the educational needs of rural adult learners.

Two types of data were analyzed in this study. First, national data (based upon a sample of 3,558 rural adults) were obtained through an existing data file at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Second, regional data were collected (on 812 adults) through a series of original surveys in five midwestern states. Information from these two sources are merged to provide a demographic profile of the rural adult learner.

Description of National Data and Procedure

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsors a supplement to the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census every three years. Titled "Participation in Adult Education," this study has been conducted during the month of May in each of the following years: 1969, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1981 and 1984. Those individuals surveyed were selected from census files with coverage in all 50 states; approximately 60,000 households were queried at the time of each survey. At the time of this study, the most current information available from NCES was the 1981 data tapes. Thus, the information presented here is an analysis of 3,558 rural adult learners who reported having participated in adult education during the 12-month period preceding May 1981. Information variables contained in the 1981 NCES data on those 3,558 surveyed participants included: age and sex; race and ethnic groups; level of education; annual family income; geographic area of residence; labor force status; occupation of employed participants; types of courses taken; reasons for taking courses; who provided the instruction; and, major sources of payment for courses.

Space here does not allow for a complete analysis of all NCES data. What I have attempted to do is to selectively review certain variables and cross-tabulate them, giving us a portrait of rural adult learners' characteristics, needs and styles. A full presentation and a more detailed analysis of these data is available in McCannon (1975).

Findings from National Data

Tables 3, 4 and 5 summarize information on the sex, age, reason for participation, and subject areas of courses taken by rural adults. Table 3 shows that 55.8 percent of the survey population were women and 44.2 percent were men. Further, the NCES data shows that 94.9 percent of the 3,558 survey respondents (or 3,378) were non-farm residents; that is to say, they resided in a small community or town or lived in the open countryside, but were not engaged in farming. The data summarized in Tables 3, 4, and 5 allow us to draw the following conclusions:

Age and Sex—Nearly three-fourths of all the respondents (both female and male) were between the ages of 23-50. There were slightly more older women participants than men.

Table 3. Age and Sex of Rural Adult Participants in Adult Education: 1981

	Male		Female	
Age	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
16 - 17	37	2.4	38	1.9
18 - 22	131	8.3	199	10.1
23 - 30	445	28.3	537	27.0
31 - 40	464	29.5	586	29.5
41 - 50	253	16.1	292	14.7
51 - 60	168	10.7	219	11.0
61 - 70	61	3.9	89	4.5
71 - +	13	.8	26	1.3A
	N = 1572		N = 1986	

Table 4. Main Reason of Rural Participants in Adult Education for Taking Courses by Sex: 1981

	Male		Female	
Reason	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Personal or Social	333	21.2	744	37.6
Improve, Advance, Update Current Job	808	51.5	722	36.5
Train for New Occupation	151	9.6	176	8.9
New Job in Current Occupation	24	1.5	36	1.8
Other Job Related	100	6.4	66	3.3
Train for Volunteer Work	36	2.3	27	1.4
General Education	103	6.6	182	9.2
Naturalization	-	-	2	.1
Other Non Job Related	14	.9	23	1.2

Reason for Participation—The most important reason listed by rural adults was to improve, advance or update their current occupation. If the reasons for participation (shown on Table 4) were collapsed into two primary reasons, occupational enhancement and personal development, we can see that over two-thirds (69 percent) of the males and just over one-half (50 percent) of the females were motivated for occupational reasons.

Subjects Enrolled In—Business subjects ranked first for rural adults; 18.3 percent reported enrolling in business subjects. There were 12.4 percent enrolled in health care subjects and 9.1 percent in education subjects.

This analysis provides the first national base-line of information about rural adult learners. These data suggest that the predominant intent for participating in adult education programs is for occupational enhancement, with personal development as a strong secondary interest.

Table 5. Rank Order of Subject Areas (Courses) Enrolled in by Rural Adults: 1981

Subject Area	Number	Percent
Business	650	18.3
Health Care	439	12.4
Engineering and Computer Science	419	11.8
Education	324	9.1
Philosophy or Religion	244	6.9
Physical Education or Leisure	221	6.2
Arts	213	5.9
Language	152	4.3
Health Education	137	3.9
Home Economics	134	3.8
Social Science	133	3.7
Personal Service	101	2.8
Life and Physical Science	87	2.5
Agriculture	59	1.7
Inter-Disciplinary	36	1.0
Other	205	5.8

Description of Regional Data and Procedure

In this section we are focusing entirely upon postsecondary education and the experiences of adults who were enrolled in higher education institutions in a rural setting. Since the data analyzed from NCES were collected in May 1981, an effort to augment and verify it with more current information was undertaken. These regional data were collected in September 1984. Also, the NCES data didn't tell us much about barriers adults experience, nor the needs and preferences they have for services. These "augmentation studies" allowed us an opportunity to probe a bit more into these areas.

Five postsecondary education institutions in the midwest were selected as sites for these augmentation studies. Included were: Drake University (Iowa); John A. Logan College (Illinois); The University of Minnesota-Morris; The University of North Dakota; and, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. These institutions represent a variety of types of postsecondary education, i.e., two- and four-year colleges, public and private institutions, single focus ad comprehensive missions, and autonomous and coordinate campuses.

Findings from Regional Data

The data collected from these institutions allowed us to analyze responses from 812 adult learners. Much of the information gathered substantiated the conclusions drawn from our analysis of the NCES data. Additional information on barriers and needs expressed by adults enrolled in three of the five institutions (Logan College, Minnesota-Morris and Wisconsin-River Falls) is presented in Tables 6 and 7. This data allows us to draw the following conclusions:

Table 6. Major Obstacles to Beginning/Returning to College for Adult Learners by Sex

	Male		Female	
Obstacle	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Distance	17	11.8	109	27.8
Costs	54	37.7	192	48.9
Time	55	38.4	176	44.8
Scheduling Conflict	37	25.8	96	24.4
Conflicts with Job	40	27.9	95	24.2
Lack Confidence	14	9.7	84	21.4
Lack of Desired Courses	28	19.5	54	13.7
Other Commitments	27	11.8	80	20.4
Other	15	10.4	31	7.9
	N = 143		N = 392	

Table 7. Adult Learners Needs by Sex

	Male		Female	
Need	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Financial Aid	43	30.0	158	40.3
More Information	25	17.4	81	20.6
Babysitting Services	2	1.3	52	13.2
Time Off from Work	31	21.6	102	26.0
Support from Employer	15	10.4	21	5.3
Support from Family	8	5.5	74	18.8
Increased Self Confidence	23	16.0	104	26.5
Other	22	15.3	49	12.5
	N = 143		N = 392	

Obstacles—Distance, costs, time and self-confidence were more often reported by women as being the biggest obstacles to beginning or returning to college than men. Men reported conflicts with job and lack of desired courses as obstacles at slightly higher rates than women. Comparisons among students at the three institutions suggests that costs and lack of desired courses are lesser obstacles at Logan College than at the University of Minnesota-Morris and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Adult Learners' Needs—The need for financial aid, information and time off from work are important factors to both men and women students in order to help them continue their education. Women cited the need for babysitting services, family support and increased self-

confidence at higher rates than men. From other questions in our survey, we found preferences for scheduling of courses to be for late afternoon and evening courses, weekend courses and clustered courses.

The total regional sample, or 812 individuals who responded to our regional surveys, were participants in adult education at five different types of postsecondary institutions. Yet, their responses painted a similar picture to those from the NCES study. Most were enrolled in courses for occupational enrichment or personal development. Similar to the NCES sample, business subjects were of most interest to them and most had to pay for their courses from personal resources. Again, women made up the majority of participants. The responses from these 812 individuals allow us to augment, at least on a regional basis and with more current data, the information which NCES collected during 1981. This augmentation study focuses on the responses from individuals enrolled in programs offered by postsecondary education institutions in rural settings, thus giving us first-hand information from rural adult learners.

Summary, Limitations and Recommendations

In the summer of 1981, a national invitational meeting on rural adult postsecondary education was held in Kansas City. One of the results from that meeting was an agenda for action. One of the items on that agenda was to "undertake a comprehensive national study of rural adults and their educational needs." Hopefully, this study fulfills that objective.

We knew that existing data was available from NCES that could give us some insights into rural adult learners' needs, but we also knew that the information would be dated at the time of publication, thus, we felt a need to augment it with more current information. Time and budget restrictions did not follow us (nor did we feel it necessary) to undertake a large-scale, original national study.

We received a great deal of cooperation with the augmentation studies at the regional institutions. The augmentation study section does provide us with a first-hand view of adults' motivations and participation patterns that were involved in postsecondary education from rural areas. We feel these individual's responses are representative of rural adult learners; however, we recognize that the sample was drawn entirely from the mid-west region of our country. Perhaps someone in the East, South or West can replicate our study and corroborate (or refute) our findings.

All of us associated with the Action Agenda Project who reviewed this study were struck with the predominance of similarities between the responses of rural and urban adult learners (comparisons were made between rural and urban adults and are presented in the aforementioned publication from Kansas State University). This suggests that equal access to quality postsecondary education is a vital concern for adult learners wherever they live. In a country committed to equal access and with lifelong learning becoming an accepted concept, all people have a right to the benefits of quality learning regardless of age, race, income or place of residence, even if that place of residence is a small town surrounded by wide open spaces.

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Rural educators speak often of the need to respect the rural culture - to not impose urban solutions on rural problems. Differences infinitely more immense appear when we examine education through the eyes of Native Americans.

Rural Education from a Native American Perspective

by Jacques Seronde

There are today 1 million Native American people in the United States, living on over 400 rural reservations which comprise nearly 53 million acres. These tribal people and lands are extraordinarily diverse: 200 languages are still spoken by peoples whose traditional cultures evolved in environments ranging from arctic barrens to hardwood and rain forests, from windswept tall-grass prairies to mountainous plateaus and hot salt-scrub deserts.

We cannot learn much from our history and social studies texts about the Native American peoples. They were first overwhelmed in battle, then systematically exploited and oppressed by a not-yet-ended succession of government "Indian agents," traders, missionaries, and educators. Perhaps we expected that by now they all would have become completely assimilated by our melting-pot culture, leaving only a few names of states and rivers as their legacy. It may be discomforting to realize that the Native American cultures yet endure, despite poverty and social distress unequaled in the United States. Educational statistics for Native Americans are grim: ninth grade median educational level, 66 percent high school drop-out rate, 1 percent college completion rate, and almost half of the population 18 or younger (U.S. Census, 1980).

For Native Americans "education" in American society started at the point of a gun. Children were forcibly taken from their parents by army and police, and sent to government or church-run boarding schools hundreds of miles from home. Only 10 years ago, students at such schools were punished for speaking their own languages. The guiding principle was that the Native cultures were inherently barbarous and pagan—cause only for shame.

No people can sustain such systematic and brutal assault on their children's minds and spirits without the development and internalization of severe psychic confusion and emotional stress. What may surprise us is that the Native American peoples have survived, refusing to surrender the last inner foundations of their cultures and values. The irony now, in this time of crisis for the identity, direction and vitality of our own national rural society, is that we have much to learn from our Elder Brother on this land.

Underlying the great diversity of Native cultures are a number of fundamental precepts held in common, the warp of a rich and vibrant multi-colored weave. All living beings are related one to another, sharing a common dependence on the sacred elements of the Creation—our Mother Earth, the sun, water, and air—and a common interdependence in the web of life. What we think of as inanimate matter or elemental forces of nature- -the rocks, streams, seas and clouds - are known to be imbued with the Great Spirit and to partake of life processes.

Within the circle of being uniting all life forms, there are no sharp fragmentary distinctions drawn between art, medicine, psychology and religion, nor between education and life as a whole. When the origins, nature and interrelationships of all beings are understood, every aspect of our lives becomes a process of performing the right act in the right way at the right time. All of life is a sacred ceremony; every word and gesture, a prayer. Understanding, learning and knowledge are contained and transmitted by all life forms and by the elemental foundation of the Creation. The earth herself, the land, the sun and fire, the dawn breeze, the flowing waters, all our plant and winged and four-footed relatives—these are our first teachers.

It is indeed a very long way from this world-view to the representative reservation classroom. Consider only the gulf between what a child absorbs at home from a traditional healing ceremony grounded in respect for the sacred unity of life, and conventional school curricula in which reductionist views of "biology," "chemistry" and "physics" are taught without any sense of the greater unity underlying these fragmentary descriptions. Consider, too, our civilization's continuing despoilation of earth, water, air, and even the power of the sun, in the light of the Native perspective that teaches that our every decision must take into consideration its impacts on the seventh generation to follow us. It is not surprising that so many Native youth find themselves bewildered and alienated from the school systems to which they are subjected. For Native American peoples, a major part of the solution lies in the articulation of a Native philosophy of education, and in the expression of that philosophy in Native-designed and operated institutions where education is re-integrated with life as a whole—and is directly responsive to the aspirations and needs of Native communities and nations. Native community-controlled schools and colleges do not meet the needs so long as they continue merely to gild non-Native philosophies and curricula with smatterings of crafts and "culture" classes.

Let us look at the question of interrelationships between education and economic development—now of national concern to rural educators—from a Native American perspective. First, what is "economic" development? We start from the origins of the word, the Greek "oikonomima" or "household order." An economy thus deals with the order, or balance and harmony, of a set of interrelated parts to a defined whole. For a land-based people and culture, the "household" in question can be no other than the Earth herself, and more immediately, the land upon which the people live. In the Native view, economic development then is the ordering in balance and harmony of our relationships with all our relatives with whom we share this earth-household.

A clear way to visualize the land as the basis of economy is to consider the watershed as a natural geographic unit. From the highest ground, often forested and moun-

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tainous, down though woodlands and rangelands to the low-lying alluvial valleys, the watershed forms a set of interrelated and interdependent environments, each with its distinctive micro-climate, rocks, soils, vegetation and animal life, and united by the life-giving waters coursing above and below the land surface. When this "household" is disordered, all life suffers. Overgrazed and clear-cut uplands no longer retain rainfall to nourish plants and animals. Sheet and gully erosion scour the land of fertile top-soil and drain water tables from under valley floors. Pour chemical wastes on the ground on one part of the watershed and they reappear in the ground water downstream. Eradicate the woodland homes of the foxes and ferrets, and farm fields are taken over by prairie dogs. Such relationships, only now being tracked by our science, have long been intuited, observed and respected by Native cultures.

Economic development in Native communities must be grounded on the foundation principles of reverence for all life, and recognition that all life depends equally on the freely given earth, air, water and sunlight. The primary task for Native families and communities is to re-assert responsibility for defining and articulating their own aspirations and visions for their future. This responsibility has been too long abdicated to more-or-less well-meaning experts from the dominant society, with the result that the traditional Native institutions for social balance, economic justice and education have largely atrophied from disuse. At the core of economic development planning for Native communities lies the process of participatory goal and objective-setting. This in turn requires understanding and affirmation of who the people are, where they are coming from and where they are at present.

Once this conceptual foundation has been strengthened, it is possible to look again at the land, for indications not only of potential livelihoods but also of specific learning, knowledge and skills needed to attain such livelihoods. The educational curricula emerge from the earth herself, from the first Teacher. Think again about the watershed, and list the fields of knowledge needed to restore the productivity of this region. We can start with climatology and meteorology (including atmospheric physics), geology and hydrology; then forestry, wildlife management, range management, animal science, soil science, botany, agronomy and entomology; and to interface with the external economy, finance, business management, and marketing.

For each of these fields of knowledge, listed as separate disciplines in the non-Native world, there is a corresponding body of information and knowledge in Native American traditional culture—each with its clearly-defined relationship to the others and to the whole of life. Pieces of this knowledge have certainly been lost, as elders have died without passing on all that they knew. However, the first Teachers still wait patiently, and the means of learning from them have not been lost. The possibility is open for the building of a re-integrative learning process, combining the detailed analyses of non-Native science with the wholistic understanding of the traditional Native world view.

The vision unfolds. Imagine a school where, first, the children learn to read and write from their own people in their own language. Imagine that learning of reading and writing from the transcribed oral wisdom, myths and history of the people themselves. Imagine now a curriculum developed from the parents' own perceptions of the life they aspire to for their children: a life of harmony and happiness, a life of being grounded, secure and productive in the land of their ancestors. That life is sustained by the land: the curriculum teaches the children about the sacred unity of life in all its diverse and beautiful aspects. Classes are the woods and fields, the deserts and mountains, the spring swelling of seeds and the fall contracting of plant-life back into the earth. Books and the wealth of audio-visual aids serve to relate what is seen and felt and observed in the immediate local area to the region and world at large, to the experiences and wisdom of other peoples in other lands. And as skills and knowledge develop, nurtured by parents, elders and teachers, the young people move gently and steadily to assume their own ways of response to the Creation's invitation to join in the work.

To paraphrase Sitting Bull: let us put our hearts and minds together to see how we shall make learning for ourselves and our children once again a joyous affirmation and building of the life we choose.

School based enterprises offer an attractive solution to seemingly different problems - improving rural schools and supporting rural economic growth. As such, they demonstrate the very best in rural creativity.

School-Based Enterprises: Rural Education Through Action Learning

by Paul F. DeLargy

Why does a community educator get involved in economic development, particularly rural economic development? This question has been asked often, frequently by community educators themselves. The answer is quite obvious: Community education has as one of its objectives improving the quality of life of a community's citizens. Since one-third of our national population is rural and many of these rural residents have a below average quality of life, it stands to reason that rural economic development falls in the realm of community education.

In Georgia, our rural schools are burdened by an inequitable distribution of resources. They are hampered by the fact that school support is based on property taxes, and most rural counties have lower land values than those of suburban or urban areas. Rural counties have lower average per capita incomes, higher unemployment, higher school dropout rates, lower academic achievement scores, more health problems and fewer services available to them from service agencies. Add to this list of difficulties the fact that close to one-third of our farms are in jeopardy, and you can begin to appreciate the difficulties that rural school systems face.

The educational needs of Georgia and the South are enormous compared to the rest of our nation. These needs are made obvious by the comparisons made so frequently in the education literature and in governmental reports. These educational needs are even greater in our rural counties.

Many rural schools have difficulties providing adequate vocational education programs for their students. One reason for the inadequate rural vocational programs is that rural schools have had urban educational models forced upon them. These urban models support job specific training and specialization training, which in many cases is inappropriate for rural communities. Rural communities need generalists. Rural schools that have been able to develop vocational programs have often trained students for jobs available only in urban areas. They, in fact, provided no programs for rural students to develop skills that would enable the students to stay in their rural community.

With this dilemma in mind, Jonathon Sher (1977) offered an alternative that has the potential of dealing with some of these rural educational problems: the establishment of school-based development corporations. School-based development corporations are nothing more than small businesses operated by and/or with students to meet community needs for services or products.

School-based Businesses

Brooks County High School in Quitman, Georgia became one of the first schools to implement Sher's school-based development corporation concept. With the help of the author and Sher, the school submitted a grant proposal for $387,000 to Youth Work, a non-profit organization set up to distribute CETA funds for high risk youth operated activities. The project, titled REAL Jobs, was funded along with 11 others in 1979, and remains the only one still functioning.

As part of the school-based corporation project, the Brooks County community education advisory council completed a community needs assessment and generated a list of community needs. Among those needs identified for the REAL Jobs project were the need for (1) a day-care center, (2) a swine breeding and feeder pig operation, (3) a construction company, and (4) a business service component.

Brooks County is a poor rural community in southern Georgia. In 1979 there were no day-care centers in the county even though the Department of Family and Children Services had indicated a child care need for at least 250 children. The need for a swine operation was due to the fact that Brooks County had more swine producers than any other Georgia county, many of whom were operating ineffectively. The decision to develop a business service operation for the project was based on the desire of the business community to hire generalists—someone who could do a little of everything, from waiting on customers and taking inventory to sweeping the floor. A community survey had indicated a need for persons with building skills, and there appeared to be job opportunities for construction workers and construction sub-contractors. In addition, facilities were needed to house the child-care center and the swine operation.

Immediately after funds were received, all four enterprises were begun. The students built a 6,500-square-foot day-care center, which met high state standards for such a facility. They also built facilities for the four-building swine operation and a facility to house the construction component of the project.

At the beginning of the project Brooks County High School was in dire need of help. It had little community support. The school had about 1,000 students in grades 8-12; 63 percent of the students were black, and over 75 percent were below the poverty level. REAL Jobs, the school-based community development enterprise (SBDE) functioned as a catalyst and an implementing agency for a broad range of needed reforms in education and community development. The project involved a logical process for integrating rural schools into the economic development of the community.

Under the sponsorship of the school district, REAL

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Jobs functioned as a corporation working for the community as a whole, providing vocational and career training for high school students. As should be true of any SBDE, the functions of the REAL Jobs project were to:

> Own and operate businesses or provide services to other productive enterprises in a local community, primarily using students supervised by the school faculty.
>
> Generate or attract income-producing opportunities to the community.
>
> Serve to help coordinate local development efforts.
>
> Train young people in entrepreneurial skills.
>
> Stimulate the development of community social services that respond to local needs, interest and circumstances.

For over five years the project components have operated with various degrees of success. The day-care center has been the most successful, having fulfilled the objectives set for the project—to improve the quality of life in the community, to provide opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills, to provide jobs for students, to impact the curriculum in a positive way, to make a profit, and not to cause unnecessary duplication of a product or service.

The day-care center made $38,000 last year, which was used for other activities not normally provided for by regular school funds. It provides an outstanding service for the community at a reasonable price and is considered one of the better child-care centers in the state. It provides jobs for students and helps prevent drop-outs. During the past several years, two new privately owned child-care centers have been started using REAL Job students as employees. The child-care curriculum was completely revised by the home economics department and now provides a two-year program for certification of child-care workers - the only high school in Georgia doing this. It has been a positive force in improving the community's attitudes toward its public schools.

Students in the construction component successfully built the swine production and child-care facilities. The construction component has proven to be a positive vehicle to help students—including special education students—in jeopardy of failing. The construction enterprise has provided many other services for the community, including building dugouts, restrooms and bleachers for the community baseball field; building brick retaining walls around trees for a city beautification program; and laying sidewalks in the city and county. It will continue to provide services to the city, county and community at large.

The swine operation was designed to provide an up-to-date contemporary learning center through which swine management could be taught in the vocational agriculture program at Brooks County High School. The swine breeding farm provides students with hands-on swine management experience and serves as a model for farmers in the area. The breeder pig operation also supplied feeder pigs to local farmers for the commercial markets. At present, the swine operation is being reorganized to include more community involvement and support and to integrate the comprehensive use of computers for management purposes.

The Brooks County REAL Jobs projects has received considerable attention. Numerous foreign visitors representing countries such as Ghana, Scotland, Brazil, and other countries have observed the project. The project was featured at the White House Conference for School/Business Partnerships and presented on a national teleconference sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Community Education Association.

About the same time the REAL Jobs project was developed in 1979, planning began in five towns in Arkansas under the leadership of the Arkansas Community Education Development Association (ACEDA) with support from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and the Ozark Regional Commission (Rosenfeld, p. 16). The planning resulted in the development of school-based development enterprises in five towns:

- In Mammoth Springs, students began to publish a weekly newspaper - it became the newspaper of record in the county.
- In Arkansas City, students started a maintenance company (Handyman, Inc.) and a photography laboratory. During the second year, they began a small newspaper and undertook a feasibility study for the renovation and conversion to apartments of an historic building.
- In Mountain Pine, the school district created Educational and Economic Enterprises, Inc., to operate a day-care center and a roller skating rink, employing 10 students and one local citizen.
- In Pangburn, students developed a community newspaper and later a woodworking plant. Their first product was a computer desk.
- In Clarenden, students attempted to open a movie theater, but it was an unsuccessful venture and SBDE was ended in 1982.

Publicity about the Georgia and Arkansas SBDE projects have created considerable interest. In a 1982 Special Report about Community Education, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation featured the REAL Jobs project as one of six outstanding projects they had helped fund over a five-year period. Distributed to over 150,000 educators nationally, the report generated requests for SBDE information and technical assistance. In response, the foundation funded the author to conduct workshops throughout the country.

The outcome of these developmental activities has been the formation of a national non-profit 501(c) organization, called REAL Enterprises, to help establish SBDEs nationwide. A national advisory council has been organized, and the Small Business Development Center and Institute of Business of the University of Georgia will provide space and support services for REAL Enterprises.

Small Business Development Centers in several states have entered into informal partnerships with organizations developing SBDEs and have provided technical assistance by training students to develop feasibility studies, marketing studies and business plans.

Jonathon Sher is currently active in the development of five SBDEs in North Carolina. Partially funded by the North Carolina Small Business Development Center and two foundations he also has a JTPA grant from the North Carolina State Department of Education. He is also organizing the North Carolina REAL Enterprises affiliate with an active state advisory council.

Plans for Future School-Based Businesses

Plans are being made to start several SBDEs in Alaska and also in Oregon. And in Hartwell, Georgia, several SBDEs are being developed as components of a major community development project to attract tourists to that northeast Georgia town. The major component of the project is a scenic passenger railroad line, which uses a 1926 Baldwin steam engine and 1929 Erie Lackawanna reconditioned pas-

senger cars. The project also includes a retail Georgia products store, which will be one of at least 14 new businesses—along with the railroad—being created to attract tourists.

The school-based retail store and 19 other businesses in Hartwell formed a non-profit corporation called the Depot Street Development Corporation to direct the development of a two-block area next to the scenic railroad as a tourist attraction. Students helped the corporation do the research necessary to have buildings along the entire street placed on the National Historic Register. Recently an architect was hired, plans have been presented, and commitments made to restore the buildings to their original design. After the restoration, Depot Street will appear as it did in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Recently an interesting modification of the School-based Development Enterprise concept was initiate. Called Arch International Export Corporation, it is a REAL Enterprise affiliate involving international business students from the University of Georgia. It will function as a student-operated export trading company. It is sponsored by a number of organizations including the University of Georgia Center for Community Education, the Small Business Development Center, REAL Enterprises and the Georgia International Trade Association. The business is currently being incorporated and is in the process of conducting feasibility studies to establish markets and products for the business.

Conclusion

According to Stuart Rosenfeld of the Southern Growth Policies Board, "The School-based Enterprise concept allows schools to become businesses as well as educational institutions, and puts education into a "real life" business setting, to employ as well as train. This may be the ultimate link between education and economic development." Rosenfeld raises some important questions: Should the local SBDE operate outside the community, the SBDEs to date have been local service businesses? Are there enough funds to adequately capitalize manufacturing or complex businesses? What about local competition, does it create a problem for school-based enterprises with local businesses? And finally, how difficult is it to get the concept of SBDEs across to school administrators to convince them to accept dual goals of education and economic development for their schools?

These questions remain to be answered, but with the number of projects now being initiated throughout the country, the answers to these questions should be forthcoming.

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Critics of higher education point to the failure of land-grant universities and community colleges to serve their rural constituencies in meaningful ways. This paper examines one model for bridging the gap between rural problems and educational resources, emphasizing the need for a genuine partnership between rural people and educational professionals.

Creating a Rural Mandate: Impacting Institutional and State Policies

by William H. Gray

The needs of rural people have historically been addressed from the vantage point of an urban theorist applying proven tools and techniques outward from the city. Based largely on notions from economic geography, it has been argued that rural areas can best be advanced when policy is directed toward growth centers, because they are the most effective at promoting population and economic growth in a region. The resulting concentrations enable the most efficient delivery of services.

When addressed under the banner of rural development, public policy has been predicated upon an assumed connection between the natural resource base and subsequent social and cultural development of rural areas. Recent research reported by Blakeley (1983), however, indicates few discrete relationships between the development of natural resources and the reduction of rural poverty. Emerging information technologies are leading to the development of new base economies that are not producer oriented, but related to distribution and transfer of information and allied products (Dillman, 1985).

It now appears that natural resources are no longer a major contribution to rural economic development. While still enormously important to a region because of the wealth they generate, they are "far less significant to the generation of jobs, improvement of living standards, and facilitations of community development activities. Human, rather than natural, resources must be the key to improving rural economies" (Blakeley, 1983). People, not the land, must become the central ingredient in economic development. In order to bring this shift in line with the needs of rural areas in an information society, rural development policy must now embrace a strategy that increases the capacity of rural institutions to develop people.

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Higher Education as a Vehicle for Rural Development

Higher education is often viewed as an important agent of change impacting rural areas. After all, many publicly supported institutions of higher education were developed (and sold) based upon the needs of the common man. Beginning with the Morrill Act of 1862, "a system of industrial Universities . . . would develop a more liberal and practical education among the people, tend the more to intellectualize the rising generation, and eminently conduce to the virtue, intelligence and true glory of the common country." This system was expanded in 1914 with passage of the Smith-Lever Act forming what is known as the Cooperative Extension Service, the largest mechanism of lifespan learning yet known. The resulting land-grant university system, with research, teaching, and service as its mission has historically been focused on serving rural areas.

Other publicly supported institutions (e.g., the community college in America) had similar philosophic basis: "open door" enrollment policy for the common man. At a minimum, these institutions can be viewed as an opportunity for upward mobility through education. From another vantage point, the advent of these popular institutions could be viewed as planned intervention to transform a nation (most particularly rural areas) from an agrarian to an industrial society.

When viewed in this latter light, these institutions have been largely successful. However, the activitism and educational advocacy targeted toward the common man has given way to a middle class, if not elitist form of education as financial pressures force these institutions to become market driven. Forces within academic disciplines and within the culture of higher education have led to an inertia of present forms at the expense of service to areas of need (however defined). Specifically, research and instruction become emphasized at the expense of public service. Further manifestation of this change includes the following:

- the land-grant university is tending toward a technological/engineering approach to service,
- regional universities have become primarily teaching institutions as budgets are increasingly scrutinized,
- community colleges lose their comprehensiveness in tough times, instead returning to the junior college model of treating the service district as a catchment area for student enrollment,
- cooperative extension programs have returned to that which is comfortable - agriculture and home economics - and away from human and community development.
- community education has not developed beyond a vehicle for personal enrichment.

In the absence of planned external advocacy, these trends result in a narrowing interpretation of the mission of postsecondary education, to the possible exclusion of public service and to the disadvantage of isolated areas.

In this paper, we will introduce a model developed, field tested and refined at Washington State University to im-

prove the fit between rural development needs and the role and mission of institutions of higher education in Washington. The change vehicle, known as the Partnership for Rural Improvement (PRI), was initiated in 1976 with partial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. After a decade of experimentation and development, PRI constitutes a viable model for fostering change in public postsecondary education.

Models for Rural Development[2]

Past development strategies have been narrow in scope, limited either by the problem addressed or the unit of analysis chosen. The individual and the community have been the traditional focal points for actvities intended to stimulate improvement in rural conditions. For example, farm programs have supported individual or firm efforts to increase income through price supports, conservation payments and loan programs. Development programs have introduced projects that would produce community improvement through broadly based citizen problem-solving groups, improved organization, or specific activities to alleviate sewer, water or transportation problems.

These thrusts have tended to be limited in scope; that is, they have focused on the solution of a single problem or a narrow range of problems (such as increasing farm income). Or, they have focused on single communities or small groups of communities, while failing to take sufficient account of the impacts and overriding influence of forces imposed from outside the locality.

Development programs of this order have certainly helped many individuals and communities; but they have not achieved a sufficiently broad conception of social organization, nor taken account of the critical role that complex organizations play in generating or obstructing change. Many communities are caught up in a regional, state or national organizational matrix which positively or negatively influences improvement opportunities to a greater degree than local decisions. Local officials and citizens certainly have some influence on local affairs, but many of the decisions which affect communities most decisively are made by firms, or other organizations based outside the local area (Warren, 1972).

Local community institutions have gradually lost many of the functions they formerly performed, while specialized public and private agencies have become more efficient in providing these services. Local leadership for solving specialized problems has been partially replaced by highly mobile professional problem-solvers who feel relatively little allegiance or responsibility to any single locality. Moreover, both professionals and local leaders have difficulty perceiving rural problems in a holistic sense and fail to understand how the program for which they work is related to the activities of other individuals, agencies or communities. This suggests a need for new or adapted professional roles to strengthen or create linkages between communities and institutions, while filling a gap in the knowledge application process (Williams, Youmans, and Sorensen, 1975; Moe and Tamblyn, 1974).

Identification of Elements of a Comprehensive Development Strategy

Regional development programs have tended to limit their concerns to physical or economic development issues, without sufficient attention to social and political development, while educational programs have often been ineffective in applying available knowledge to solution of rural problems (Moe, 1975).

Moe and Tamblyn (1974) discuss requirements for a more integrated design of rural development systems which include: (1) increased problem solving and knowledge utilization capacity at the local level; (2) increased problem solving and knowledge utilization in regional, state and federal organizations which serve local areas; (3) strengthening of linkages among the levels so that the two-way exchange can occur; (4) research and development as an ongoing process which will continuously enable individual communities and organizations to improve their development capacity; and (5) a revised organizational arrangement that makes increased use of the capabilities of public and private educational and research institutions.

A broad assembly of models have been proposed for resolving the rural improvement dilemma. No attempt will be made here to thoroughly summarize and evaluate the full range of possibilities. Rather, the focus is on those models which are most closely related to the strategy emphasized in the Partnership for Rural Improvement.

Havelock (1969) developed a research utilization model which has since been tested in a variety of educational settings. It has potential as part of a systematic rural improvement process. The model emphasizes a problem or "user" orientation: a problem in need of resolution is defined by an individual or group, followed by systematic searching for knowledge and skills to resolve the issue.

Rothman extends the Havelock model through a more deliberate scheme for deriving knowledge application from social science research. He assumes a six-stage process which begins with the basic knowledge pool and culminates with broad use of the knowledge (Rothman, 1974). The rationale for the Rothman model rests on the apparent continued failure to systematically retrieve useful information from the basic research pool to solve problems or realize opportunities. Solutions to problems or realization of opportunities can be experimentally operationalized through field testing, Rothman suggests. Results can be refined and then widely diffused for broad use by individuals, groups, and organizations. The model has appeal because it assumes that knowledge can be systematically applied if an adequate process is developed.

Eberts (1971) and Sismondo (1973) have developed and tested a model which focuses on community change, but which has implications for broader regional application. The fundamental stimulus to development, they suggest, comes through the appearance of new formal linkages between communities and organizations (Sismondo, 1973:31). Eberts tested the model empirically through analysis of data from a sample of non-metropolitan cities in New York state, and with a sample of 300 counties of the northeast United States. The model assumes that any development program must begin with policy objectives which lead to changes in structural conditions.

In conceptualizing the Partnership for Rural Improvement, elements were selected from each of these approaches or models. The resulting model includes these elements: user oriented, systematic application of knowledge, policy objectives that lead to structural changes, and interrelated change strategies.

PRI has operationalized these conceptual elements into a comprehensive framework for rural development. Institutions of higher education constitute the resource system; rural communities comprise the user system. The PRI framework binds these separate systems together into a consortium oriented towards rural community problem solving. The core elements of the PRI intervention process are: collaboration among institutions around a common

problem, the linkage function, the organizational neutrality necessary to carry out the linkage model, and the development of staff roles which focus on the relationships between units of knowledge and action systems.[3]

Models of Organizational Change Within Higher Education

The responsiveness of higher education to the needs of rural areas must be addressed in the larger context of the nature and purpose of higher education. Different perspectives on the nature and purpose of higher education are revealed through three popular metaphors - ivory tower, social service station, and culture mart (Aldelman, 1973). Each concept of higher education is characterized by a different definition of service and differing perspectives on its role and function in higher education. Service can be provided through the fulfillment of teaching and research, through "ideas of value," through social criticism, through social problem solving, or through social activism. Each form of service has its advocates in historical and contemporary literature. Common conceptions of service include:

- **college or university service:** committees or other governance activities internal to the department, college, school, or campus related to program development and institutional policy.
- **professional service:** committee, editorial, or other work for national or regional professional associations and/or academic disciplines.
- **public service:** activities "other than" basic research and teaching involving direct relationships with groups external to the academic community. (Crosson, 1983)

For our purposes, the first two are dismissed as too narrowly oriented to the educational organization and academic discipline respectively.

The latter definition of public service—that which is "other than" basic research and teaching and involves relationships with external groups—is useful as a starting point but not sufficiently specific. Many of the activities carried out under the banner of service are research activities; many others are teaching activities. What differentiates "public" service activities from research and teaching activities is that they are performed for groups that have not traditionally been involved with higher education. The composition of those "external" groups changes over time. It is therefore necessary to continually redefine public service in terms of the current dynamics of institutional-societal relationships.

A definition appropriate to the current context of higher education must include three major areas:

- advice, information, and technical assistance to business, government, neighborhood groups, and individuals on problems with which the University has competence;
- research toward the solution of public policy problems whether by individual or groups of faculty members or by the formal institutes and centers of the University;
- conferences, institutes, seminars, workshops, shortcourses, and other non-degree-oriented upgrading and training for government officials, social service personnel, various professional people, business executives, and so on (University of Massachusetts, 1971).

This set of definitions covers the range of possible service activities—including research and teaching services—and the range of potential beneficiaries of college and university public service.

The PRI program has sought to include elements of the above definition into the rhetoric of the higher educational system, to develop a mechanism which incorporates that function into that system, and to find a funding vehicle for its continuation. The task, however, is made increasingly complex by the different role and mission of the various educational providers: research university, land-grant university, regional university, community college, and common school (Zimmerman and Gray, 1983).

Operationalizing a Rural/Higher Education Partnership

The Partnership for Rural Improvement was developed with partial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to "devise" appropriate organizational forms to bridge the gap between rural problems on the one hand, and the lack of university resources available to address those problems. . . ." (Kinsinger, 1982). The Foundation frequently employs a strategy of providing developmental funds that enable a service agency to mount a new but untried venture, with the promise of a major breakthrough and demonstration of a better way to carry out its mission. Assistance to Washington State University to enable public service/rural development work was in this foundation's programming tradition.

Because of its multi-faceted design, the mission of PRI varies according to the perspective of the describer. What may be an end for some would legitimately be a means for others. For rural citizens, the mission may be to assist them in improving their collective well-being. For Washington State University, the mission may be to strengthen its capability to support community or regional planning and development functions. Or, it may be viewed as a strategy to modify the land-grant university structure and mode of operation toward more effective integration of instructional, research and extension resources. The mission may be to provide assistance to public service agencies that would enhance the effectiveness of their functions. Each of these perspectives is legitimate.

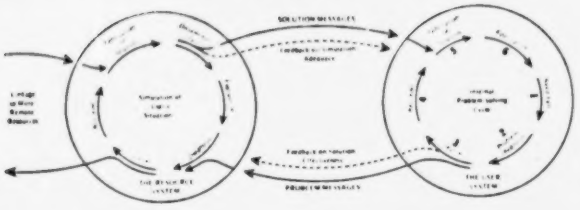
The Partnership for Rural Improvement was initiated in 1976 to strengthen capacity for rural improvement from two levels: (1) within rural communities and regions, where individual citizens, local officials, and members of public agencies are principle participants; and (2) within agencies and institutions which have specific responsibility for assisting rural people where agency and institutional professionals are the major participants. The program particularly focuses on increasing the ability of educational institutions to provide a broader range of more appropriate kinds of assistance to rural regions.

The relationship between these spheres (institutions and the community) does not occur naturally; rather it requires fostering within each separate sphere. The culture and reward structures of rural communities and institutions of higher education differ markedly. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1. Characteristics of Spheres

Formal Models/ Institutions	Informal Models/ Rural Communities
Hi-tech	Low tech
Non-responsive	Personalized
FTE driven	Socially driven

Figure 2



To be successful, educational and development programs in small communities must recognize the informal context of rural life. Programs must be relevant to the community context and the lives of rural people. This emphasis contradicts tendencies within the university structure which tend to value the general and abstract, rather than the specific and concrete. Richard Margolis (1981) summed up the options of several rural educators like this: "Rural people tend to think locally and to act socially. Therefore, the best way to reach them is through local programs that the whole community has a stake in."

The PRI intervention draws heavily on the linkage model to bring together the separate spheres (Haveock, 1973). As illustrated in Figure 2, linkage is seen as a series of two-way interaction processes which connect user systems with various resource systems, including basic and applied research, development and practice. Senders and receivers can achieve successful linkage only if they exchange messages in two-way interaction and continuously make the effort to simulate each other's problem solving behavior. Hence, the resource systems must appreciate the user's needs and problem solving patterns; and the user, in turn, must be able to appreciate the invention, solution formulation, and evaluation processes of resource systems. This type of collaborative interaction will not only make solutions more relevant and effective, but will also build relationships of trust between user and resource persons and a mutual perception that the other is truly concerned, will listen, and is able to provide useful information. Over time these trust relations become channels for the rapid, effective and efficient transfer of information.

PRI was designed to provide a connection between resources for community problem solving and the local users of those resources. The essence of the PRI model is the initiation, maintenance, and strengthening of linkages between resource providers and users on a continuing, organized basis.

The PRI consortium of educational institutions, governmental agencies and citizens is located precisely at the interface of knowledge and action. Within the community, a full-time program associate position has been developed jointly by the land-grant university and participating community colleges.[4] These positions serve as the first line linkage between knowledge and action. At each of the participating four-year universities and colleges, community service centers have been developed to stimulate the interface between research and practice. Each of the "partners" in PRI contribute specialized knowledge and unique perspectives. Action is implemented by the exchange of this knowledge through a process of mutual learning.

In this linking of university resources into the community, the university and community both gain. On one hand, the rural community receives knowledge from the educational institutions. On the other hand, the educational institutions gain insight and knowledge from the rural communities. The field experience is carried back into the classroom where it is shared with the emerging professionals and students.

To achieve a socially viable planning and development process, local people must perceive the activity as "theirs" and the process as involving them. The PRI program associates seek to engage these individuals in activities through which perspectives are shared, mutual learning occurs and conflict can be resolved. The program associate is a contributor and a participant in these dialogues, providing the benefits of special knowledge while seeking knowledge from citizens.

Community problem-solving becomes a social process as knowledge and action are linked. The task is one of planning and working with the community, not for it. The notion of expert-client relationships is dispelled and community capacity and local control are enhanced. In the last phase of the strategy there is gradual withdrawal of the PRI staff roles allowing the local community increased independence in tasks which they now have the knowledge and skills to undertake. Technical assistance remains available, but PRI staff encourage and support local self-sufficiency.

This linkage system requires the support of staff persons skilled in a number of functional roles and who are identified as "neutral," that is, as a staff to the Partnership, rather than as a representative of a single resource provider. Ideally, the administrator and core staff are direct employees of the governing board of the Partnership. Only in this arrangement are they likely to be effective long-term advocates in a multi-institutional framework.

Maintaining Support for Educational Innovation

Innovative programs are commonplace within today's institutions of higher education, providing they are externally funded. Few change programs, however, are incorporated by the institution. In those relatively few instances where they are, the innovative element is often submerged by the larger mission of the bureaucracy.

Major grant making organizations, like the W.K. Kellogg Foundation have begun to extract "maintenance of effort" agreements as a precondition for funding support. While this makes life a little easier for the program administrator, it has little bearing on the degree to which program elements are incorporated. Rural programs continue to be viewed as "marginal" to most institutions of higher education, in spite of FTE commitments.

After a decade of experience in pioneering new organizational forms for public service in higher education, the PRI program has succeeded in surfacing rural development and rural learners onto the agendas of institutions of higher education in Washington. Core positions in the Partnership are largely funded through the reallocation of instructional funds. However, resources for continued program development and innovation will likely have to come from external sources.

The next generation of the partnership will be program interaction between higher education and state agencies and institutions as the client/user system. It is anticipated that the resulting partnership will demonstrate the need for a linking mechanism between higher education and state government in the economic development arena. State support for planned change efforts of the type described in this paper should follow.

Footnotes

[1]This paper is an adaptation of a paper presented to the conference "Serving the Rural Adult: An Action Agenda for Postsecondary Education," March 10-12, 1985 at Logan,

Utah. It has benefited from the comments of Mary Emery, University of Idaho Cooperative Extension and Jackie Spears, Kansas State University.

[2]This section draws heavily from sections of the summative report to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, "Cycles of Change: Seven Years of Partnership, 1976-1983."

[3]For a discussion of these elements, the reader is referred to Braglio-Luther, et al., "Cycles of Change: Seven Years of Partnership, 1976-1983."

[4]The collaboration process and staff roles are described more fully in the McDaniel and Loomis article in this volume.

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Community education programs are highly effective in generating community spirit, in mobilizing scarce resources, and in encouraging learning as a lifelong vocation. For rural areas, community education serves a vital role in linking communities with resources and individuals with broader educational resources.

The Community Education Model: Learning Opportunities for Rural Adults

by Dawn Ramsey

"You don't need to worry about opening the school. Why, everybody out here has a key or knows where to get one."[1]

What better compliment to a school, its principal, its district, its people! The school has become a true community school - open around the clock for people who live near it.

Peaks Mill School is one such rural school. Built in 1939 as a part of the Works Progress Administration, this strong imposing structure originally housed grades 1-12. Situated in the rural northeast portion of Franklin County, Kentucky, this school is looked to by area residents not only as a place to educate their young (in 1959 Peaks Mill became a 1-6 program) but also as a meeting place for the community.

Lee Troutwine, resident of Peaks Mill and chairman of the Franklin County Community Education Board expressed the school's centrality to the community when he said, "People who live in Peaks Mill feel like it is the 'chosen land' and our school is the nucleus of the community along with the local country store and local churches."[2]

A community school highlights the effectiveness and appropriateness of implementing the community education model as a vehicle for bringing educational resources and learning opportunities to the rural adult.

Community Education - the words themselves are so common and so general - is not a new phenomenon in rural areas. Bits and pieces of the community education model have been a part of rural America for years.

"There's no point in goin' to town for that. 'Sakes, Bessie Jones sews the tightest quilts in this state. She'd be pleased to show you. Just go visitin' and ask her. She'd relish the company."[3]

In addition to people passing their skills on to friends and relatives, rural folk have joined together for community barn dances, house raising and in support of local families in emergencies. "The concept of community education and community schools has historically been an integral part of life in rural/hispanic communities. The school has served as a focal point of life in rural communities for many years, serving as the center for community functions. Some of these functions included dances, political meetings, and weddings, and included all members of the hispanic family."[4]

Things are not so very different today. These informal bits of community education are in evidence in rural communities across this country and even around the world.

In a more formal way, the community education model can be adapted to any local area. It provides a framework for addressing the learning needs of rural adults by combining educational resources with existing activities and new ideas. As a result, community education can provide a comprehensive plan for maximum resource utilization for that community's people.

The Community Education Model

"My belief (is) that the vast majority of people are essentially the same, that we desire most of all to improve ourselves through learning, books, and contacts with others, that we strive in youth and throughout our lives for continued personal improvement." [5]

Jesse Stuart was a writer - he wrote about life. He was an educator - he challenged his readers to think differently about life. He was a Kentuckian - he shared his belief in Kentucky's people with the world. In his eloquent way the belief he expressed serves as a preface to, almost a backdrop for, the community education model.

"Community education is a concept that stresses an expanded role for public education and provides a dynamic approach to individual and community improvement. Community education encourages the development of a comprehensive and coordinated delivery system for providing educational, recreational, social and cultural services for all people in a community. Although communities vary greatly with some being richer than others, all have tremendous human and physical resources that can be identified and mobilized to obtain workable solutions to problems. Inherent in the community education philosophy is the belief that each community education program should reflect the needs of its particular community. The philosophy advocates a process which produces essential modifications as times and problems change."[6]

Community education is not simply a list of classes or even a set of programs. It is a process whereby communities of people work together to create a combination of classes, programs, activities, and discussions unique to their needs. Even the definition of community education will vary from location to location. In Franklin County, community education is defined as: "a planned system of educational and community service programs designed to meet the needs of the children, youth, and adults in the Franklin County Community."[7] Other people have said it more simply -

Dawn Ramsey in the director of Franklin County Community Education Program in Frankfort, Kentucky.

everyone teaches - everyone learns

or

people helping people

or

something for everyone

Wherever it is implemented, the community education model has generally accepted commonalities. Identified in the federal Community Education Acts of 1978 these eight elements are[5]:

1. **ROLE OF THE SCHOOL.** The program must provide for the direct and substantial involvement of a public elementary or secondary school in the administration and operation of the program.
2. **COMMUNITY SERVED.** The program must serve an identified community which is at least coextensive with the school attendance area for the regular instructional program of the school.
3. **COMMUNITY CENTER FACILITIES.** Program services to the community must be sufficiently concentrated and comprehensive in a specific public facility, such as a public elementary or secondary school, a public community or junior college, or a community recreation or park center, in terms of scope and nature of program services, to serve as a community center.
4. **SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES.** The program must extend the program activities and services offered by, and uses made of, the public facility in terms of the scope and nature of program services, the target population served, and the hours of service.
5. **COMMUNITY NEEDS.** The program must include systematic and effective procedures for identifying and documenting on a continuing basis the needs, interests and concerns of the community served with respect to community education activities and services; and for responding to such needs, interests and concerns.
6. **COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.** The program must provide for the identification and utilization to the fullest extent possible of educational, cultural, recreational, and other existing and planned resources located outside of the school; and it must encourage and use cooperative methods and agreements among public and private agencies.
7. **PROGRAM CLIENTS.** The program must be designed to serve all age groups in the community as well as groups with special needs.
8. **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.** The program must provide for the active and continuous involvement, on an advisory basis, of institutions, groups, and individuals in the planning and carrying out of the program, including involvements in the assessment of community needs and resources and in program evaluation.

No two community education programs will be alike because the community education model is molded community by community to reflect the needs of that particular area. The implementation of the eight elements as a part of the model provides learning opportunities for rural adults both through the outcome of the process as well as in the process itself. Unique local orchestrations of the model occur at anyone of six steps:

1. initial conversations and informal interest polling.
2. formation of a citizen council and formal structure
3. community needs assessments
4. community problem solving
5. program implementation
6. ongoing discussions and redirections.

1. Initial Conversations and Informal Interest Polling

The people who want to develop a community education program in their community informally talk to their neighbors to identify others who are also interested. Formal educational resources become involved as this small group seeks information and/or materials from the local school district or a regional university. Contact is made with a staff person who can assist with model implementation and, as the process develops, can assist the community in securing educational services from both the LEA and higher education.

2. Formation of a Citizen Council and Formal Structure

This step features the formalization of community education for the community. A group of citizens take on an advisory role in planning a systematic approach to community education. Usually a series of regular meetings are announced and office space and telephone arrangements are made. At this point a coordinator (possibly part-time) is hired or a volunteer is appointed to direct activities. Again, a consultant from an educational institution may be able to assist in the hiring and/or training of the coordinator and council. Shared resources and interagency cooperation may develop as arrangements for office space and phone require a pooling of local resources.

3. Community Needs Assessment

After a structure for implementing community education is in place, the Citizens' Council usually undertakes a community needs assessment. This can be done either formally or informally with a written questionnaire, phone tree, community meeting, etc. The goal is to identify the needs in the community. While a part of this process might be to ascertain what classes people would like to take, or who would be willing to teach; another and at least equally important task is to list what residents see as the important issues and problems that need to be considered. These issues and/or problems may or may not result in class offerings.

4. Community Problem Solving

The core of the community education model is the process by which neighbors work together to solve common problems and meet common needs. In this step, resource sharing and interagency cooperation is critical. With the results of the needs assessment as a point of departure, the community council members and other residents begin the process of working out ways of solving identified problems, of creating programs and activities to meet identified needs and/or exploring the new problems and needs that are identified in the process of problem solving. For example, in one community a need to provide opportunities for isolated senior citizens to meet together for activities and classes may be identified. In the process of planning for this need, transportation problems might emerge. This new problem may be solved through interagency cooperative agreements whereby the local school district agrees to transport senior citizens, the local church donates space,

the Cooperative Extension agent agrees to provide programs and activities, and the local country store donates needed supplies. To round out the day, a woman's club may volunteer to prepare sack lunches. Through cooperative planning, many of the identified problems and needs can be addressed.

5. Program Implementation

This step is the most easily identified part of any community education program. As programs, classes, and activities are planned in Step 4, they are advertised, organized and begun in Step 5. Each community's approach in Step 4 provides a unique set of programs for Step 5. The coordinator and council members must now let everyone in the community know what is available. Whether the advertising is by fliers, posters, or word of mouth, it is important that the word be spread. In previous steps, council members have learned to work together toward common goals and common solutions. In this step their efforts meet public scrutiny. Opportunities for individual growth include learning promotion and advertising techniques, communication skills, organizational and management skills.

6. Ongoing Discussions and Redirections

Critical to the continued success of any community education structure is the process of continued evaluation and adjustments. Needs change as communities change. The beauty of the community education model is its flexibility. Community councils meet regularly to evaluate current programs and activities, to make necessary changes, and to respond to new issues that affect their community. Communities constantly cycle through Steps 3,4,5, and 6.

The Possibilities

Everyone Teaches - Everyone Learns leads to the development of human potential. Community education offers opportunities for rural adults to learn—to grow in every activity in which they become involved. Some down-play the importance of macrame' or old-time movies in the church basement. But in reality, these simple low-cost educational efforts play a highly effective role in generating community spirit and uncovering the talents of community members. These efforts also can act as a springboard for community services such as daycare centers, community dinner theaters, handicapped recreational programs, literacy efforts, and other services which benefit individuals and communities.

In Montgomery County, Kentucky, Community Education sponsors a homebound adult basic education and literacy program. Instructors get to people who cannot get to classes - older people, young mothers, etc. and teach them at home. They offer classes in rural centers in subjects such as gardening, canning, and animal breeding. The Community Education program established a senior citizen center in a rural area. Senior citizens are transported to the local agencies with which they must deal. In the summer, school buses bring rural residents to town one day a week to swim. A health program was established for rural women and young children. These are just a few of the many activities sponsored by the Montgomery County Community Education Program. According to Don Patrick, the former director, "Through their guitar classes, Montgomery County turns out more pickers than anybody in the world."[9]

Russellville, Kentucky, has a new Community Education program and already boasts of classes on Civil War relics, puppet making, Black history, appetizers and hors d'oeuvres, and birdwatching. Russellville has an interesting approach to parent involvement by offering a voluntary pre-school program on Saturday that involves both parents and children. Clarence Gamble, assistant superintendent, points out: "Our pre-school program is paid for by local funds and prepares both the parents and their children for active involvement with the schools. The community classes provide participants with a sense of belonging to the community and the schools. Many of these participants do not have children in our schools."[10]

Some of the outcomes a community and its residents can enjoy from an active community education program include:

- increased community spirit
- solutions to community problems
- cultural activities
- recreational activities
- increased public awareness
- organized volunteers
- increased intergenerational contacts
- forums for discussion
- fuller use of public spaces
- structures for bringing in credit classes
- elimination of duplicated services
- evaluation of community needs
- unified efforts
- reduced vandalism and crime

Community education benefits the individual as well as the community. Participation in community education activities can enable people to:

- use their talents
- develop self-confidence
- make friends
- gain experience in public speaking
- develop organizational skills
- become involved in community life
- develop decision making abilities
- enroll in credit classes
- develop self-initiative
- train for job skills
- develop better communication skills
- develop better leadership skills
- develop skills in resource analysis
- develop skills in information gathering
- develop skills in public relations
- strengthen their sense of belonging to the community

Conclusion

"Community education reflects the belief that learning is lifelong, and that self-help efforts foster human dignity, compassion, and individual pride. Community Education is a philosophy, a way of looking at public education. Community education programs work precisely because they are designed by local residents to meet local needs."[11]

Peaks Mill is a unique community. Its uniqueness lies in what it shares with hundreds of thousands of other unique communities across the U.S.A. In Peaks Mill, community education is a "Frontier Days" celebration, classes, a parade complete with a police car, a fire engine and assorted bicycles, a ball tournament sponsored by the Ruritan Club. Farmers in Peaks Mill, as a result of a community education class entitled "Using Computers for Small-Farm Management," may decide to pool their money to purchase a modum to link the school computer with free farm programs available through the state university and cooperative extension program. High school students can then use this same equipment for their computer education classes.

Like hundreds of thousands of rural communities across our nation, Peaks Mill can mold the community education model to fit its needs. And through community education, they have an opportunity to improve the quality of life.

Notes

1. Interview with Phyllis Rogers, Community Education Instructor, Frankfort, Kentucky, January 7, 1986.
2. Interview with Lee Troutwine, Chair, Franklin County Community Education Board, Frankfort, Kentucky, February 10, 1986.
3. Interview with Doe Martin, citizen, Grayson County, Kentucky, December 27, 1985.
4. Ricardo Barros, **Rural-Hispanic Community,** Community Education Proven Practices Series, (Chama Valley Independent School District #19), p. i.
5. Jesse Stuart, quoted in University for Man, Division of Continuing Education, **The Rural and Small Town Community Education Manual** (Manhattan: University for Man, 1980), p. 1.
6. Larry E. Decker, **People Helping People,** Community Education How to Series, No. 1 (Midland: Pendell Publishing Co., 1976), p. 4.
7. Franklin County Community Education, **An Overview of Community Education in Franklin County, Kentucky** (Frankfort: Franklin County Community Education, 1983) p. 2.
8. Decker, **op. cit.,** p. 6.
9. Interview with Don Patrick, Former Director of Community Education, Montgomery County, Mount Sterling, Kentucky, February 13, 1986.
10. Interview with Clarence Gamble, Assistant Superintendent, Russellville Independent Schools, Russellville, Kentucky, February 13, 1986.
11. Mary Richardson Boo and Larry E. Decker, **The Learning Community** (Washington, D.C.: National Community Education Association, 1985), p. 1-2.

Serving rural adult learners requires a basic and fundamental understanding of both the culture of adulthood and the culture of higher education. This paper explores a model for bridging the two cultures.

Adults and Higher Education: Bridging the Culture Gap

by Maurice Olivier

Adult learners are undoubtedly one of the most pervasive forces currently influencing and challenging the very fabric and structure of today's higher education enterprise. Few observers and critics of higher education today would contest the idea that this new group of students is clearly dedicated to lifelong learning through the nation's colleges and universities.

Increasingly, at scholarly and professional meetings and in mainstream publications, attention has focused on adaptations to allow institutions of higher education to serve the new constituency, particularly those adults pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate programs. An implicit assumption made by most institutions is that a more practical curriculum, more flexible degree requirements, and courses offered at more convenient times and in varied formats are the new institutional reforms needed to effectively serve the growing adult market.

But as Patricia Cross (1985) points out, the task in adapting institutions of higher education to serve the needs of the adult learner is more profound than simply changing the time when courses are offered.

> Educators should be thinking about more than new ways to deliver the standard curriculum, about more than convenient schedules and locations for new populations of learners, about more than increasing the accessibility of lifelong learning opportunities. Rather, it seems to me that the task is to reconceptualize the role of postsecondary education in the learning society. (Cross, 1985)

As many practitioners in adult higher education will attest, adapting college and university programs to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of adult learners is no easy task. Serving the adult population raises very complex issues. Many of these issues, I believe, require more thoughtful and considered analysis and discussion than are currently taking place on the campus today.

This paper proposes that a new lens is required to provide a wider angle of vision in identifying and designing higher education's response to the adult learner. One way to re-examine our thinking about the changes that could and should be incorporated into higher education is to use the analogy of culture. From this new perspective, we can come to understand that we are essentially dealing with two different "cultures"—the "culture" of the university or college community and the "culture" of adulthood.

As institutions of higher education continue to wrestle with the questions of how program responses and institutional structures can be reshaped to serve the needs of the adult learner, more attention needs to be devoted to the careful and considered analysis of both cultures. The absence of any serious campus discussion concerning the fundamental differences between these two cultures will only perpetuate what I call "cultural gridlock" - an inability to move toward understanding each other.

A Point of Reference: Discovering the Importance of Culture

In 1978, I conducted a year-long study which examined the nature and characteristics of adulthood and the nature and characteristics of the college/university community. The purpose of this study was to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the special aspects of serving adult learners, particularly in an off-campus setting. The study included a review, analysis, and synthesis of the history, events, and characteristics of both higher education and the adult population of New Hampshire beginning in the year 1636 and continuing through the early 1970s. In addition, over 100 interviews with adult learners, campus faculty and administrators were conducted.

One major outcome of this study was the recognition that serving adult learners, both on and off campus, requires a basic and fundamental understanding of both the culture of adulthood and the culture of a college/university community. These findings have been documented in a report titled "Future Directions and Emphasis: The Two 'States' We're In" (Olivier, 1978).[1]

This comparative historical analysis between higher education and adults clearly indicated that a major "cultural gap" exists. The cultural divide is perhaps at its greatest, when analyzing the culture of adulthood in the rural setting. Occasionally, rural adult learners and the higher education community have managed a frozen smile across the terrain. However, most campus initiatives to serve the educational needs of the rural adult learner have been focused on the issues of marketing and delivery of programs, leaving many needs unmet.

Colleges and universities are not designed to serve adults. They have been generally perceived as "a place where you get an education" during one stage of your life. For adults, learning is not a once-in-a-lifetime "investment" of time, money, and personal commitment. It becomes, by desire and necessity, a lifelong investment. Adults as students, because of varied and extremely diverse lifestyles are seemingly not compatible with the institution's purpose. Many faculty members, for example, find it difficult to teach adults, perceiving them to be incompatible in terms of academic preparation. Consider the following faculty response to the question: "Where does adult learning and life-

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long learning belong on this campus?"

> Nowhere, or if there must be one, keep it away from everything else—give it to the extension division. Then the rest of us can concentrate on our regular teaching and research and won't have to bother about that low-standard stuff.

Unfortunately, such a sentiment is still reflected in the attitudes of many faculty and campuses today.

Many of the questions and issues being raised today concerning higher education's response to the nation's adults run counter to the norms, values, traditions and assumptions widely held in academia. Simply stated, colleges and universities were not designed, organized and structured to serve adults. Despite long-standing and remarkable solo efforts of cooperative extension, continuing education divisions and other non-traditional programs, colleges and universities still lack the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the lifelong learner in the learning society. According to Cross:

> The learning society calls for thinking about students as permanent members of an extended academic community. The concept of a continuing educational relationship with students is far more exciting than the old alumni relationships that depended heavily on loyalty and money. (1985)

To date, most institutional efforts have been aimed at increasing the learner's awareness of what is available on the campus through some fairly aggressive marketing strategies and techniques. Such efforts certainly position college and university programs in the minds of potential adult students, with the hope of increasing enrollments, but they fall short of creating an on-going and lasting educational relationship. In order to more fully understand the nature and scope of this cultural divide, we need to take a closer look at the characteristics of both cultures.

The Culture of the College/University Community

A college or university achieves its goals through creating an environment calculated to bring about change in people—what some have called "growth inducing climates." The environment of a college or university consists of several interrelated parts. It is an aggregation of land, buildings, equipment and supplies, and a population of students, faculty, staff, and governing boards. The physical plant and the people are what we see on a visit to a campus.

The unseen environment is a "culture." This culture consists, in part, of ways of doing things, and encompasses administrative organization, process and procedures, degree requirements, faculty committees, curricula, methods of instruction and research, decision-making processes, rules, politics, rewards, penalties, and work habits. The culture also includes the common values, expectations, standards, assumptions, traditions, general atmosphere, and the behavior patterns of the people involved.

Each institution selects those who will be admitted, those who will be allowed to remain, and those who will be given credits, degrees, and other credentials. Each institution also sets the terms on which instruction will be available by deciding on the programs to be offered, the academic schedule, the location at which instruction takes place, tuition and other fees, and student aid. Decisions on the matters determine which persons will be excluded from the higher educational system altogether.

The people in the culture are related in complex ways. For example, the students bring a unique set of interests and traits. Through such interplay, a student sub-culture evolves that becomes an influential source of change for all the individuals who are inducted into it. Thus, students are not only the objects of the educational process, but also an important part of the environment in which instruction takes place. Similarly, individual faculty and staff members bring to an institution their unique traits and interests. Individually and collectively, they create a sub-culture that influences their own members and also their students. The sum of the various sub-cultures, including the interactions among them, becomes the culture of a college or university community.

This culture, for the most part, has not changed dramatically over time. In fact, in "Three Thousand Futures: The Next Twenty Years in Higher Education," Clark Kerr and his staff discovered a fascinating fact:

> Taking as a starting point 1530, when the Lutheran Church was founded, some 66 institutions that existed then still exist today in the Western world in recognizable forms. These are the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the parliaments of Iceland and the Isle of Man, and 62 universities. Universities in the past have been remarkable for their historic continuity . . . and have come out less changed than almost any other segment of their societies.

Generally, institutions of higher education have deep-rooted traditions and conventions and hold to long established and cherished beliefs. Even in America, as Keller (1983) pointed out:

> Every college, school, or university has embedded in its tissues an intangible set of traditions, values, and hopes. Sometimes these are a fairly unified set of values . . . Some campuses have an "organizational saga," an institutional mythos, that dominates the place . . . An institution's traditions, values, and aspirations may no longer be in step with current realities and may be very difficult to maintain in the probable environment ahead.

The Culture of Adulthood

The culture of adulthood is equally complex. The ongoing roles and responsibilities adults have for families, work, careers, community service, and managing leisure activities are varied and, at times, very demanding. Today, more than ever, it is impossible to assume that adult lives follow an orderly, linear process. Actually, the process is circular. Careers are interrupted and started as individuals make loops in the age system. Examples of such loops would be a woman who becomes a college freshman at the age of 45 or a man who starts a new family at the age of 50. According to Nancy Schlossberg:

> People engage in renewal activities all through adulthood; for example, in a given class one might find three grandmothers ranging in age from 40 to 80. Being a grandmother today is not what it was in the past. Some are young and some are old; some are tired and some are fresh. What we are seeing is a demographic change where four- and five-generation families may be the norm; where one can be both a grandmother and a granddaughter simultaneously; where the fact that one is a grandmother, mother, or wife should not be the end of inquiry - it does not say anything about whether a person is ending or be-

ginning a career. Furthermore, one cannot always tell the difference between people who are 3 or 50—the dress is not that different; the hairstyle is not that different. Fifty- and 60-year-olds now wear jeans to class. (1984)

Another major characteristic of the adult learner population is the range, depth, and richness of experience and insight. As Frances Mahoney (1982) reported:

> A diversely prepared student population is one in which the mix of experience, motivation, ability, aspiration, and insight is constantly in flux. Personal issues faced by students are compounded by problems with children and spouse. Work schedules complicate academic patterns, but work experience adds to the quality of the insight and of the questions that students often bring to challenge the thinking of faculty and other students. Ethnic and social class differences function to create a sense of cognitive dissonance that leads students to examine some of their well-established beliefs and to adjust their thinking in the light of new or discrepant information.

"Transitions" seem to be the most normal state for the late 20th-century adult. In the past, the adult could sit quietly for a portrait; today's adult can barely be caught on fast speed film. As John Naisbitt (1982) put it, "These days, the only constant is change . . . from industrial to information age, from regional to world culture, from one education for one future to lifelong education for the constantly changing present . . . ." We experience what Patricia Cross calls "blended life-styles" in which a person does not necessarily follow a prescribed life course. Clearly, one major characteristic of the culture of the adult learner is its fluid lifespan. As Aslanian and Brickell (1980) found "over four-fifths of adult students cite some major transition in their lives as the primary cause for their return to college."

Within the rural setting, the culture of adulthood reflects some very distinctive characteristics. For example, rural adults typically share the reality of geographical isolation which, no doubt, limits the scope of options to support their learning needs: Traveling distances to a campus are usually prohibitive. Rural adults are also very pragmatic in their thoughts and actions; there is a need for immediacy of application. Rural adults also have a greater sense of self-reliance. The desire to solve their own problems is very much an inherent characteristic also highly cherished in the rural setting fosters sense of apprehension and occasional distrust of outsiders.

In general, both cultures can be summarized as follows: Colleges and universities represent an established structure (culture) characterized by expectations of student homogeneity in areas such as campus residency, full-time study, and life phase development. In contrast, the culture of adulthood is characterized by its heterogeneity in terms of life experiences, levels of knowledge, and degrees of motivation. The lifestyle of adults not only embraces diverse and ever-changing life circumstances but also the tremendous responsibility for family.

The Dual Learning Culture Model

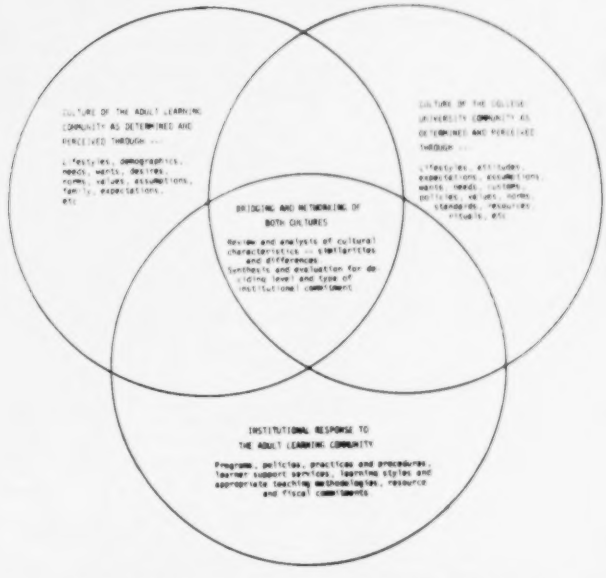
Following that year-long study and my own experiences in working with both cultures, a model was developed which, I believe, facilitates bridging both cultures: The Dual Learning Culture Model. This model provides a new lens which widens the scope of vision to more completely encompass the dynamic relationship between the two cultures. It helps identify and analyze dimensions and elements in each culture for the purpose of achieving compatible interests, shared understandings, and learning in community.

The Dual Learning Culture Model (Figure 1) was designed to be a comprehensive strategy for analyzing various aspects, dimensions and conditions within these two cultures. It was intended for use by professionals in the higher education community and also for some groups of adult learners. In organizational terms, the Dual Learning Culture Model utilizes six structural elements to help institutions of higher education successfully bridge two seemingly incompatible worlds. These are:

1. Situation and Trend Analysis Process
2. Leadership Development for Faculty and Administrative Staff
3. Curriculum Developments and Renewal
4. Learning Communities and Networks - Internal and external to the campus
5. Service Systems
6. Planning, Evaluation, and Institutional Commitment

All six elements are focused on bridging the two cultures. They represent organizing frameworks to facilitate discussion and action. It is not a linear model—bridging can occur through any one of these areas. However, the likelihood of establishing an infrastructure that supports a workable partnership between the adult learner and the college/university will be greatly increased when all six areas are functioning at some minimal level.

Figure 1: The Dual Learning Culture Analysis Model



Using the Model: Empowering the Rural Adult

Many campus attempts to serve adults are based upon implicit assumptions concerning teaching and learning, admission criteria and curriculum content and process. These assumptions, although not often made explicit, are frequently conveyed through the approaches and methods used in needs identification and program planning. Consequently, learning needs and interests of adults often remain

unmet or misunderstood by the campus community.

Within the rural setting we have come to understand that successful programs are those that are "owned" by that community. As was recently stated through a set of four regional conferences sponsored by The Action Agenda for Rural Adult Postsecondary Education (1985), on serving the rural adult learner:

> Some generalizations do emerge from the models most successful in meeting rural needs. Successful programs seem to literally grow out of the community itself. The link between purpose and product is tight, responding to specific need embraced by the community as a whole. Community members take an active role in shaping the programs developed and controlling the outside resources called upon. Community-based organizations or rural libraries are often successful because their origins lie deep in the communities they serve. But other providers - colleges, cooperative extension, rural development centers - can also be effective, once they join hands with the community as willing partners in the educational process. The programs most successful are the programs "owned" by the rural community.
>
> A second characteristic found among successful programs is that they respect cultural differences. At the very least, the program recognizes and respects the values and lifestyles of rural people.

One of the conceptual foundations which supports the Dual Learning Culture Model is the philosophical commitment to a process of empowering the people. This conceptual foundations was drawn from work completed in 1975 through a two-year FIPSE funded project which established six university-sponsored community learning centers (CLC). According to Robby Fried (1980), the CLC project director:

> The empowerment process is less a handing down of knowledge between the professional and the other people than a partnership, a mutual sharing of ideas, intuitions, and experiences. The power of empowerment involves a sharing, not a delivery, and that means reciprocity between facilitating professionals and the people they work among.

Central to the idea of empowerment is the belief that rural adults have the capacity to learn and solve their own problems. Citing the proceedings of the recent regional conferences:

> . . . successful programs respect adult autonomy. Programs that address the learner's expectations, that accommodate adult lifestyles and responsibilities, and that share control over content and method with the learners are more likely to be successful. They embrace the belief that adults inherently have the capacity to learn and solve their own problems - they need only the proper resources. (Proceedings, 1985).

How then, do colleges and universities go about finding the appropriate setting where mutual discussions concerning these issues can take place? One of the structural elements of the Dual Learning Culture Model is the Situation and Trend Analysis Process. This process engages members who represent both cultures in some discussion, assessment, and analysis toward facilitating a new understanding of each other. In short, it is a process which recognizes the importance of shared learning and it empowers the community with the rights of ownership.

This process is summarized to serve as an illustration of how one of the six structures can be employed in a real life setting. Other settings might call for one or more of the other frameworks.

The Situation and Trend Analysis Process: Toward Mutual Understanding and Community Ownership

The Situation and Trend Analysis Process is not a needs survey. It is a six-step process which engages appropriate groups and individuals from both cultures for the purpose of:

a. determining ways in which adult learning needs and interests and institutional resources can be meshed in a viable and vital program.
b. establishing an on-going dialogue and network within both communities which can facilitate a greater mutual understanding.
c. providing a framework which makes community ownership and shared learning possible.

STEP ONE: Establishing Collaborative Assessment and Planning Group: This core group is comprised of 12 to 20 people, including community members, members of civic groups, potential learners, faculty, deans, and other academic administrative staff. This group assumes responsibility for reviewing and discussing dimensions and characteristics of the various campus and adult communities chosen for assessment and analysis. It also assumes responsibility for two types of information: (1) demographic information, and (2) anecdotal information including perceptions of the communities involved.

STEP TWO: Determining the Current Situations and Trends: This step is focused on determining existing situations within each of the respective communities being analyzed. The Collaborative Assessment and Planning Group reviews and shares information and perceptions concerning the communities involved. A tentative plan of action is proposed for conducting the community interviews.

STEP THREE: Conducting the Community Interviews: Members of the Collaborative Assessment and Planning Group identify 60 to 100 community leaders and citizens who might be interested in participating in one-half hour interviews. Interviews are conducted by members of the core group at a variety of locations within the community over a three-day period. Team members are paired to conduct the interview with community members. During these interviews, no questionnaire is completed; rather the interview focuses on a set of probing questions. This interview process provides not only learning needs and interests, but also the conditions and situations under which learning should be organized.

STEP FOUR: Interpreting and Translating: The Collaborative Assessment and Planning Group is then charged with preparing a summary report to include their individual observations and perceptions—What did you see? What did you hear? What did you learn? A preliminary program response is developed. The planning group agrees on what appropriate resources will be required.

STEP FIVE: Reviewing the Initial Program Response with Community Members - the "Open Houses": Based upon their preliminary report, team members organize feedback sessions - "open houses." At these "open houses" the initial program response is presented to members of the

community who participated in the interview process. Members of the planning group facilitate the review and discussion of the group report. Two types of information are distributed at this meeting: a summary of the team's observations and perceptions of the culture of the community, and the one-year program response which is discussed in a small group format. These groups report on whether the program response is indeed appropriate and in line with community and learner interests and needs. Community members are then asked to volunteer as community resources to facilitate program implementation. Many community members will volunteer to serve as faculty, as program coordinators, and as advisors to the planning group.

STEP SIX: Networking: Once consensus has been reached by all parties and groups involved, program implementation needs to be followed by the establishment of an informal network of citizens, participants, and other community members to assist in monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness.

This Situation and Trend Analysis Process was carried out by the School for Lifelong Learning at least a dozen times in New Hamphire over the past six years. The result of this process has been significant. Between 1972 and 1978, 78 students were able to complete associate and baccalaureate programs in the northern portion of the state. Subsequently, activity resulting from the Situation and Trend Analysis Process (carried out in 1980) has allowed 380 rural adults to complete the requirements for associate's and bachelor's degrees. Three regional offices were also established which fostered, in a very tangible way, the working partnership between the university community and the rural adult learner. In addition, the Situation and Trend Analysis Process was vital in initiating a series of discussions and conferences on issues associated with economic development in northern New Hampshire.

Some Reflections

The Dual Learning Culture Model provides us with the framework to capitalize on the natural community of interest between colleges and universities and the adult population. It is a bold approach, based on the idea that some of the best and most productive innovations are also the simplest and most obvious. The purely rational and linear model of needs assessment, program planning, marketing, and delivery is valuable but not sufficient. Attention also needs to be paid to the direct involvement of the institution in experiencing the culture of the adult, to face-to-face meetings in local communities, and most of all, to creating a cauldron and letting it bubble.

Lastly, this paper has aimed at being a modest proposal but it contains a potentially radical element. There is a sense in which adult learning is a frontier of higher education. It affords a perspective for the re-evaluation of more traditionally oriented higher education. One of the great benefits of exploring this frontier is that many of the outcomes may find a wider application in colleges and universities across the country.

Footnotes

1. This report served to set in motion a five-year action agenda for the school for Lifelong Learning of the University System of New Hampshire. It helped initiate a major institutional transformation from an organization whose mode of operation was delivery - deliver a course, deliver a program, deliver a faculty member - to one committed to bridging the cultural divide between adults and higher education. A new framework within the institution evolved to embrace such concepts as compatible interests, shared learning, empowerment, and membership and association. These concepts served as the guiding principles in reshaping the institution's mission and learning philosophy.

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The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has been an acknowledged leader in rural adult education. As rural economies shift, however, many of the services offered through CES agents seem inappropriate. This paper explores the rural free university model and its usefulness in linking CES resources with local needs.

The Rural Free University and the Cooperative Extension Service

by Jim Killacky

Throughout this special issue there is ample evidence and support for the assumption which underlies this paper - i.e. that for economic, social and cultural reasons, there is an increasing need for adult learning opportunities in rural America. The rural free university model has been shown to be effective in responding to the needs of rural adult learners (Killacky, 1984a). The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) is the largest adult education organization in the world (Knowles, 1977). This paper proposes the widespread development of the rural free university model by the CES. Although the rural model has been developed with some success by the CES in Kentucky (Quick, et al. 1982), there is still need for further development. The most recent blue-ribbon committee looking at the future of the CES notes "ways must be found to reach more people with educational programs through the CES" (USDA-NASULGC, 1983, p. 4).

The Rural Free University Model

The rural free university model is based on the notion that anyone can teach and anyone can learn - everyone in the community is both a potential teacher and learner. Free universities offer ungraded, non-credit courses to the community. Developed by the University for Man (UFM) at Kansas State University, the free university model was extended to rural communities across Kansas beginning in 1975. There are now over 50 programs of rural free university education in that state involving more than 35,000 participants annually at a per capita cost of less than $8. In Manhattan, where UFM is located, some 900 courses are offered each year engaging over 12,000 participants. Course leaders are all volunteers, and there are no credits or examinations. Courses both in Manhattan and in the smaller communities across the state cover every conceivable topic one could expect to find in any adult learning catalogue.

One substantive measure of the validity of the rural free university model lies in actions taken by the Kansas Legislature. In 1979 UFM proposed legislation that would make state funds available on a startup matching basis to communities wishing to form their own free university project. In an unprecedented action, the Legislature took only 10 weeks to pass and appropriate funding ($40,000) for the Community Resource Act. Since then over 40 projects have been funded in an average amount of $1,300 - showing that one does not need large amounts of funds for effective and responsive programs.

The rural free university model has brought considerable change to the face of adult education in rural Kansas. There is little argument about its success; and for its participants and communities, it accomplishes much. For example:

1. It demystifies learning.
2. It creates new interests and taps heretofore unrecognized community resources.
3. It provides informal and cost efficient learning opportunities, as there are no grades and leaders are all volunteers.
4. It keeps old skills alive and thriving.
5. It provides an important forum for nonthreatening attention to taboo subjects: alcoholism, spouse abuse, single parenting and a range of mental health issues.
6. It helps address the critical issues of rural isolation and the "nothing to do" syndrome.
7. It provides an entree for newcomers to a community and an opportunity for the emergence of new community leadership.
8. It allows participants and community members to cross social, economic and cultural barriers.
9. It is a means of fostering adult development, especially for rural women who wish to turn to new pursuits once their childrearing days are over.
10. It utilizes the skills, abilities and talents of older people, giving them an active role in the community and a vital sense of importance.
11. It provides a much needed clientele for the sponsors of such programs.
12. It opens the doors of learning to a population not usually disposed in that direction, and thereby creates an awareness of the potential in more formal academic pursuits.

The Cooperative Extension Service

At the national level the CES is a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At the state level it is a division of the land-grant university. At the local level it operates from the County Extension Office - often located in the county courthouse. The fundamental goal of the CES, established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, is the transmission of practical knowledge to the people of the nation. This knowledge is generated primarily through the teaching and research functions at the University.

The CES currently operates in some 3,150 counties in the United States and its territories. Program areas include agriculture, natural resources and environment, home eco-

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nomics, community development and the youth program 4-H. Some 18,000 staff members nationwide work for the CES, functioning as administrators, supervisors, state specialists and county agents. State specialists serve as the interpretive link between teaching/research at the university level and the county agents. Programs/information are transmitted locally through the 8,000 county agents who live and work with the people at the county level. Assistance is provided through demonstrations, meetings, workshops, short-courses, publications and mass-media. CES programs cover a wide range of topics, with a primary emphasis on education for increased efficiency in agricultural production and marketing. Other areas follow in decreasing order of priority. Matthews (1960) provided this useful summary of the methods and CES contributions to adult education:

1. During the two world wars and the Depression, the CES dealt effectively with disasterous situations because of the extensive formal and informal complex resource networks established by service workers.
2. The CES has effectively taught its staff to present information simply.
3. The CES has had a major role through adult education in fostering farmers' productivity.
4. The CES has fostered the involvement of learners - a basic principle of effective program building.
5. The CES has pioneered the demonstration method of teaching and the production of learning materials, especially visual aids and uses of the media.

The first and still major substantive criticism of the CES was the book **Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times (1973)** in which author Jim Hightower argued strongly that the CES had focused on helping large agricultural producers, ignoring the pressing needs of the majority of America's farmers and the great majority of rural people. Hightower's work served as a catalyst for a large number of reports, analyses, commissions and panels devoted to developing new plans and directions for the CES. Most recently, a blue-ribbon commission completed a major study titled **Extension in the '80s**, calling for the development and demonstration of new educational methodologies and delivery systems, for materials and programs having regional and national applications, and for greater numbers of volunteers in CES programs (USDA-NASULGC, 1983). The rural free university model provides the CES a strong and positive response - both to Hightower's criticism and its own blue-ribbon commission - but not without raising some questions.

The Rural Free University and the CES

The integration of the rural free university model with the CES will call for a fundamental shift in the CES view of education and sources of knowledge. The cornerstone of the CES approach to learning is the demonstration method, involving professionally qualified people as transmittors of knowledge. The free university, on the other hand, draws primarily on the knowledge and wisdom of people at the local community level on the formal or informal expertise of local volunteers. This does not necessarily exclude the CES base, but it goes beyond the traditional sources, such as the university, for learning opportunities.

Additionally, there is a pragmatic problem of introducing new and innovative ideas in stressful times of economic and fiscal instability. Even though the free university model is very cost efficient, it represents change. During insecure times like these, there is often a tendency in large organizations such as the CES to stick with what "we know works."

An effective answer may rest in small scale development of programs within the CES combined with the dissemination of what is already known about rural free university efforts and the CES. For example, in 1979 UFM initiated a joint project with the CES in Kentucky. Now over one dozen local free university programs operate under the auspices of a local county extension office in various parts of that state. Although initiated because of the enthusiasm of the particular individuals involved rather than the CES as an institution, state leaders soon became interested when they saw the new audiences these projects reached. In an article in the **Journal of Extension** this important point was made about the different bases of knowledge between free universities and the CES:

> SOS Learning Projects (the name of the Kentucky project) are taking a significant step by merging these two valuable yet distinct bases of knowledge and making the resulting information available to the local community. The fact that local citizens are responding in numbers beyond expectations suggests that this merger is meeting important needs.
>
> (Quick et al., 1982, p. 11)

In Kansas several local free university programs cooperate with the CES by listing their offerings in the brochures, and one county extension office offers a limited free university program.

The following points outline steps that might be taken and directed to the state level leadership in the CES:

1. A brief review of the history of the CES and its role in that particular state. A proposed revised mission statement would include language reflecting the integration of the rural free university with the CES, thereby combining the CES's strength as a stable institution with its needs to actively engage a wider audience of learners, to bridge the have-have not gap in terms of participation, and to affirm rural values and culture.
2. The designation of a state specialist whose primary task would be to assist county staff members in adopting the free university model into their ongoing activities. This person would also take charge of research and evaluation efforts of the programs.
3. The development of a rationale that addresses issues such as:
   a) the new audiences this program will reach;
   b) the public relations benefits that will accrue to the CES as a result of positive reactions to the learning networks and systems created within the service area;
   c) the closeness of the rural free university model to the ideas central in the creation of the CES - the vitality of conservation, development of alternative resources and the concept of providing knowledge and information for rural people;
   d) the need to provide county staff with new and creative options for work. In light of the fact that agriculture now involves less than 3 percent of the population, the development of such options may be critical if the county staff are to avoid becoming professionally extinct.

The number of reports, blue-ribbon commissions and task forces looking into the future of the CES suggest that change in that organization is appropriate. While the rural free university model may not answer all of the issues being faced by the CES, it will make substantial con-

tributions to the enhancement of this giant in adult education. Furthermore, the rural free university model is consistent with the thinking and philosophies espoused by two early figures in the development of the CES. In 1911, Liberty Hyde Bailey wrote, "the materials and agencies that are part of the furniture of the planet, are to be used by each generation carefully, and with regard to the welfare of those to follow us" (1911, p. 178). Even earlier, Seaman Knapp—the acknowledged founder of the famed Extension demonstration method - might have been proposing the adoption of the rural free university model when in an address to extension workers in Mississippi he said:

> Now let us have an education of the masses for the masses. Your mission is to solve the problems of poverty, to increase the measure of happiness, to add to the universal love of the country the universal love of knowledge and comfort, and to harness the forces of all learning to be useful and needful in human society.
>
> (Knapp, 1952 p. 38)

The rural free university model holds the potential for helping the Cooperative Extension Service respond to these charges in a manner that would please both Bailey and Knapp.

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Adults faced with a crisis need immediate access to information more than entry into longer-term educational programs. This article describes one state's attempts to coordinate its educational resources in response to the agricultural crisis.

Rural Isolation: The Need for Information

by S.L. Ward

The state of the farm economy has been of considerable concern nationwide and has received extensive media attention during the past year. Farm financial conditions have deteriorated over the past four years as agriculture has experienced a prolonged period of excess supply with persistent pressures on income and net worth of farmers.

The inflationary period of the '70s provided an increasing financial base for borrowing, but since 1981 farmland values have declined drastically and lower farm incomes have reduced the farmer's ability to service existing debt. Significant numbers of farmers, particularly commercial sized family farms (those with gross sales over $100,000), face problems in obtaining credit, and many face liquidation or foreclosure. In Kansas, as in other states with a strong agriculturally based economy, the problem of individuals and families being dislocated from rural communities has reached crisis proportions.

As an example of the problems being faced nationwide, a farm finance survey completed in February 1986 by the Kansas Crop and Livestock Reporting Service indicated that 5.55 percent of Kansas' 72,000 farmers expect to fail during 1986. The same survey also indicated that an additional 12.5 percent are in critical financial trouble with debt-to-asset ratios of 70 percent or more—a strong signal that their survival is in serious doubt. Agricultural Economists at Kansas State University predict that an additional 25 percent of Kansas' family farms will likely be lost during the following five years. And to make gloomy statistics even more dire, it is estimated that for every seven farms that fail, one rural main street business establishment will close. Based on these predictions, conservative estimates of the numbers of Kansans likely to be affected over the next 12 months and the following five years would suggest that perhaps as many as 200,000 rural residents or approximately 25 percent of Kansas' rural population could be displaced by 1991.

The implications of this type of displacement in rural communities is likely to be devastating, but more immediate is the impact on individuals and families who are faced with the loss of not only a livelihood but also a way of life. For many rural residents facing this situation, the broad distances that once represented their livelihood and their freedom now isolate them from potential assistance. Time, distance, lack of program availability, shortages of trained helping professionals and insufficient supporting revenues are usually cited as the major barriers to providing assistance in most rural communities.

Work at Kansas State University and the Menninger Foundation over the past few years has suggested that lack of access to information about existing programs is perhaps an even greater obstacle to rural residents seeking assistance with personal and family problems than the traditional barriers. Two programs are now attempting to address the service delivery needs of rural residents through the development of an information access system. While these two programs have mutual roots they have evolved in different directions.

One of these programs is the Service Coordination System for Rural Rehabilitation developed by the Menninger Foundation's Research and Training Center for Vocational Rehabilitation. This model is designed to provide disabled rural residents with a user oriented, actuated and controlled delivery system which is community based, locally adapted, yet linked to a state or regional information network.

The other program is the Kansas Farmer's Assistance, Counseling and Training Service (FACTS). Established by the 1985 Kansas legislature this program was designed to assist Kansas farmers, ranchers, agribusinessmen and their families in avoiding or alleviating the problems and distress resulting from the current agricultural economic crisis. More specifically the legislative mandate directed the FACTS Program to:

1. help Kansas farmers, ranchers and agribusinessmen save the family farm/business operation whenever humanly possible.
2. help individuals and families cope with the problems involved in living under the conditions imposed by the current farm economy.
3. help families make a successful transition to another livelihood, when absolutely no way can be found to save the farm/business.

In simpler terms, the FACTS Program was developed to serve as the state's point of first assistance for rural individuals and families in crisis. In this capacity, the FACTS Program was envisioned primarily as a statewide, toll-free telephone hotline to provide information and referrals for farm production, financial management and family stress problems. In fact, the overwhelming number of calls has caused the FACTS Program to evolve into much more than just a hotline referral source for farm families. In the first eight months of operation, nearly 2,000 individuals and families have requested FACTS assistance.

There have been some surprises in the individuals calling and the types of assistance requested. Prior to starting up the hotline, all pertinent research and knowledgeable input suggested that this economic crisis was a young farmer's problem and that, as such, the farms involved would be smaller. Also, it was suggested that since farmers are such a stoic lot, that a significant proportion of all calls would be from farm wives wanting to discuss family prob-

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lems. Statistics suggest otherwise, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Personal Data			
Male Callers:	72.33%	Average Age:	49
Female Callers:	27.67%	Average Years Farming:	25
Farm Data			
Diversified Farms:	63.73%	Crop Only Farms:	23.75%
Agri-Businesses:	6.70%	Livestock Only Farms:	5.80%
Average size of Farms:	1145 acres		
Type of Assistance Requested			
Financial/Legal:	70.84%		
Employment/ Retraining:	10.66%		
Family Problems: (Includes mental health problems)	5.71%		
Other: (Includes requests for specific information)	12.79%		

At the current level of usage, it is estimated the FACTS Program will receive calls from at least 5 percent of the state's farmers in the first year. Considering the increasing difficulty farmers are having in finding operating capital for the approaching season and the expected impact of the 1985 farm bill, there is every reason to expect the level of calls to increase during the spring and winter of 1986.

Currently, the FACTS staff consists of six staff positions. This includes:

1) a program director with experience in business and community development,
2) an attorney with an agricultural law background,
3) a farm management specialist with a strong farm finance background,
4) a family needs specialist,
5) a family therapist with a strong crisis intervention background,
6) and an employment/retraining specialist with extensive experience in dislocated worker programs.

The current procedure in providing assistance to hotline callers is for a FACTS staff member (or trained volunteer) to take the initial incoming call and fill out an intake sheet listing name, address, phone and basic nature of the call along with a brief description of the situation. Callers are then assured of the absolute confidentiality of all calls and asked when it would be convenient for a FACTS staff member to call them back. Return calls are made in all situations except when we encounter extremely emotional callers, potential suicides, or callers who refuse to provide a name or phone number. During this interval, the situation is assessed, prioritized and a determination is made as to which staff specialist (or specialists) can provide the most appropriate counseling.

A return call is then made to the individual and as much time as is necessary is spent on the phone with them to determine specifics about the problems being experienced, how these problems developed, and what the caller wants for his or her future. The FACTS staff specialist then helps callers examine potential options for dealing with the identified problems and, as necessary, provides referrals to sources of direct assistance.

At the present time, services provided directly by the FACTS Program consist of:

1) Farm Credit Counseling - no cost farm plan reorganization and debt restructuring assistance at six locations throughout the state.

2) Legal Assistance - no cost legal assistance at 11 locations throughout the state provided through a contract with Kansas Legal Services, Inc. (a non-profit legal assistance corporation).

3) Documentation of Innovative Approaches - cataloging of innovative individual and community responses to specific problems that might be transferable to other situations.

4) Assistance Directories - development of a statewide directory of emergency assistance resources and a directory of agricultural, social service, community and legal assistance sources for use by both the FACTS staff and other helping professionals who might have direct contact with distressed farmers and other rural residents.

5) Community Response Assistance - technical assistance to local communities and organizations in developing local responses to specific situations and needs.

6) Master Calendar of State, Regional and Local Events - identification of workshops, seminars, conferences and other educational activities that might be of value to either those with problems or other helping agencies.

7) Documentation and research of farm and rural community conditions and analysis of possible state and local initiatives.

8) Documentation and research of radical and extremist organizations and activities.

One unexpected result of receiving so many calls has been the ability of FACTS staff to accurately identify immediate problem situations (e.g. a bank closing), individual and family needs not being met by existing services and geographical areas of the state with concentrations of particular types of problems. The ability to identify such situations and needs has motivated the FACTS staff to be as responsive as possible. In some situations, response is possible almost immediately. In other situations, FACTS works cooperatively with other state and local agencies and programs to provide assistance utilizing existing resources. To date, the FACTS program has seen only one agency refuse to utilize existing resources to respond to rural crisis situations.

Currently, cooperative relationships have been developed with seven agencies providing needed services statewide:

1) Kansas Cooperative Extension Service - provides one-on-one farm financial analysis to all farmers requesting such assistance, assists communities with economic development programs, provides entrepreneurial training seminars for dislocated farmers wanting to establish a private business, provides training for individuals and organizations wanting to establish inter-personal support networks, and cooperates in the development of local Farm Stress Seminars and Rural Issues Forums.

2) Kansas Attorney General - investigates and provides legal assistance in cases involving loan fraud and consumer protection.

3) Consultation of Cooperating Churches in Kansas - provides immediate cash grants for families needing temporary emergency assistance for food, medical assistance, utilities, etc.

4) Kansas Rural Issues Ecumenical Coalition - assists organizations and communities in the development of Rural Issues Forums and other public educational programs.

5) Regional Mental Health Centers - provides long-

term professional mental health counseling as well as providing local backup, as necessary, in suicide intervention situations.

6) Area Agencies on Aging - provides special services to individuals 55 and older as well as providing employment/retraining assistance.

7) Small Business Development Centers - provides one-on-one financial counseling services for rural non-farm businesses and also provides assistance to communities in developing plans for adapting to long-term business pattern changes.

Recent work by rural sociologists suggests that dislocated farm families value most those individuals who took the time to listen and were willing to be non-judgmental. The experience of the FACTS staff strongly supports these findings. If there is any one significant aspect of the development of the FACTS Program that has enabled it to succeed, it has been having a professionally trained staff that has extensive personal experience in the subject matter areas they deal with. When callers talk to a FACTS specialist it becomes immediately obvious to them that they are talking to a person who not only cares about their problem, but also understands it. As a result, very close relationships tend to develop between the FACTS staff and the individuals and families they counsel - relationships that sometimes last over extended periods of time and eventually encompass a wide range of problems.

Another factor that seems to result from the professional expertise of the FACTS staff is trust. It is not infrequent for callers to have literally hundreds of thousands of dollars at risk when they call the hotline. It is absolutely critical that the information individuals receive be the best possible for their circumstances. And the only way this can be assured is with a professional staff. Volunteers in such a program as FACTS can play many valuable roles, receiving initial intake calls (after they have training in handling suicide calls), assisting in research and promotion activities, providing administrative support. But the counseling role is one that must, if for no other reason than liability, be handled by professionals.

One demonstrable result of the levels of trust exhibited is the fact that at least half of all calls daily are repeat calls. Furthermore, the followup rate on referrals is remarkably high. In most situations it runs close to 100 percent. In two particular types of referrals (legal assistance and farm financial analysis) followup sometimes exceeds 100 percent. Such a situation results when individuals find the service so valuable that they go home and tell friends and relatives about the service and they, in turn, go directly to the service provider, bypassing FACTS.

Another factor that has contributed much to the success of the FACTS Program has been its political neutrality. Considerable effort has gone into insuring that callers are provided with factual information as it relates to their situation. From the beginning, it was felt that if callers believed that counseling was biased toward any particular political viewpoint, the program's credibility would be seriously compromised. Our success in achieving this goal has aptly been demonstrated by the fact that, to date, the FACTS Program is the first issue all of the state's farm organizations have ever unanimously supported.

But for all of the apparent responsiveness and success of the FACTS Program, several issues still need to be addressed. One persistent problem is exposure. Media support has been remarkable, but even so a common complaint from individuals across the state is that they don't find out about the program until it is too late. Additionally, several priority needs have been identified that have yet to be met through any existing resource.

The emotional toll of operating a farm under today's economic conditions can be devastating to both individuals and families. In order to help families work through these stresses, the FACTS Program believes it is highly desirable to develop a statewide "Good Neighbor" network whereby farmers and farm families who have been through crisis situations can provide peer support to others facing similar problems. Finding the resources to begin the development of local support networks that can link together has been difficult. Similarly, the effect of farm stress on children is extreme. But as of yet there are few, if any programs, that are capable of responding specifically to youth problems either in a family setting, through the schools or through youth programs.

The fact has also been recognized that professionals from a wide variety of agencies and organizations who have direct contact with farmers and other rural residents under stress are at a loss as to how to deal with the intimate, personal (and sometimes explosive) situations that can suddenly develop. Much work needs to be done to provide these professionals with a working knowledge of how to deal not only with such situations but also their own feelings about such situations.

And lastly, the potential for research across the broad range of individual, family and community issues involving reactions to stress and change are hardly being addressed. To put it mildly, there is a significant event occurring in rural America today. It is one that we have a responsibility to know more about; not just so we can cope with the immediate problems, but also so we can address the future.

Rural educators point to the need for increased inter-institutional collaboration – partly in response to scarce resources but also in response to the complex problems faced in many rural areas. This article examines some of the experience gleaned from ten years' work in inter-institutional collaboration directed by the Partnership for Rural Improvement.

The Partnership for Rural Improvement: An Approach to Inter-Institutional Outreach

by Robert H. McDaniel and Ralph A. Loomis

There is a growing recognition within the ranks of rural adult educators of the need for institutional collaboration in meeting rural problems. At the same time an examination of successful programs in meeting rural needs has brought to light certain generalizations. These programs are most often characterized by:

- Community members having an active role in program development and management;
- Recognition of and respect for rural values and lifestyle;
- The belief that community members have the capacity to identify and solve their own problems – if they can tap the proper resources (Spears, 1985:4-5).

This paper examines a model for collaboration among educational institutions, public agencies and rural citizens manifested in the Partnership for Rural Improvement (PRI) program in the state of Washington. PRI is a consortium for community development which incorporates the characteristics identified above and which successfully undertook more than 150 community projects in 1985.

Impetus for the Partnership for Rural Improvement

A vast array of nonprofit and public agencies are responsible for providing goods and services to rural people. These organizations have introduced numerous programs aimed at producing community betterment. For the most part these same programs have tended to be limited in focus, intent on solving a single problem or a narrow range of problems.

Often professionals and local leaders associated with these programs have had difficulty perceiving rural problems in a holistic sense and have failed to understand how their program is related to the activities of other individuals, agencies, or communities. The end result is that delivery of services has been piecemeal and uncoordinated, suggesting the need for new or adapted professional roles to strengthen or create linkages between communities and institutions, and to fill the gap in the knowledge application process (Williams, Youmans, Sorenson, 1975:5-8; Moe and Tamblyn, 1974:13-14).

The Partnership for Rural Improvement, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, was initiated in 1976 to address these problems. Specifically, PRI was created to implement and evaluate alternative rural development models and to seek to improve the range, quality and coordination of services available to rural people. PRI has especially concentrated on increasing the ability of educational institutions to provide a broader range of assistance to rural areas within the state.

Organizational Structure

Structurally, PRI consists of eight higher education institutions—the land-grant university and its cooperative extension service, two regional universities, the state's liberal arts college, and four community colleges. The relationship is formalized by memoranda of agreements and shared governance.

Each of the universities and the state college have designated community service units. These units have two major functions. They act as an access point for citizens in obtaining faculty expertise needed for community projects and they provide project planning consultation. The land-grant university's designated unit additionally provides program development leadership, coordination, and management functions for the Partnership.

The community colleges participate in the Partnership through a shared staffing arrangement with the land-grant university. A PRI program associate is jointly hired by the two institutions and is housed in the participating community college. Each community college program has a district-wide PRI advisory committee made up of community-based public agency representatives and interested citizens.

PRI staff, then, consists of the four program associates from the community colleges and individuals assigned from the affiliated universities. A policy board, which sets program direction, consists of a representative (at the dean's level or above) from each of the higher educational institutions and two community representatives from each of the community college advisory boards.

The PRI Approach

An underlying premise of the PRI program has been that public organizations and agencies with mandates to provide public services to rural areas can enhance the effectiveness of their delivery systems through collaboration.

This premise is based on the fact that while development problems and change in rural areas are multifaceted, service organizations are functionally specialized. Usually no single organization possesses all the necessary re-

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sources, knowledge, and skills to address all the dimensions of a problem. Provider organizations are normally limited to supplying only a specific service or input, for example, financial assistance or a technical engineering skill. However, in completing a community project, the users of these services generally require inputs from more than one organization. Problem resolution, then, is dependent upon a means for coordinating the unique inputs of specialized service providers. Recognizing this, one focus of PRI efforts has been to foster working relationships between organizations and to test means of strengthening cooperation between service providers and the users of public service.

In choosing this approach to rural development, PRI draws upon the work of Moe and Tamblyn (1974), Moe (1975), and Mulford et al. (1975). Moe and Tamblyn's (1974) approach to rural development emphasizes increasing local problem-solving capacity, the strengthening of linkages among local, state and federal organizations and the development of organizational arrangements that make increased use of the capabilities of educational institutions.

Mulford et al. (1975) have outlined a process for creating interorganizational coordination. A 10-step strategy begins with problem definition and proceeds through the identification of key organizations to securing organizational commitments for resolution of the problem. The process then moves to achieving agreement to coordinate organizational activities, securing consensus on the appropriate approach, reallocating resources from the coordinated agencies toward the achievement of the approach, developing an organizational or coordination structure. Finally the process initiates a set of interorganizational objectives which lead to a specific plan of work.

In establishing partnerships among higher education entities, PRI has concentrated on implementing new organizational arrangements and linkage mechanisms which make it possible for institutions with overlapping goals to work together in goal achievement (Moe 1975). In PRI's case, the goal has been to meet higher education's responsibility for public service.

As part of this conceptualization of an approach to rural development activities, PRI incorporated certain core elements into a model for public service provision by educational institutions. These core elements are: collaboration among institutions, organizational neutrality, and the development of staff roles to actualize the approach.

Collaboration within the Partnership

Much has been written on the realities of interorganizational cooperation and collaboration (e.g., Klonglan and Yep, 1972; Aram and Stratton 1974; Davidson, 1976; Warren, Mulford and Yetley, 1976; Hougland and Sutton, 1978; and Rogers, et al. 1982). From the 10-year experience of PRI, we have identified seven levels of collaborative interactions. The following list is arranged by increasing degree of formality and integration of activities.

1. Informal communication among the personnel of the various member institutions.
2. Ad hoc exchange of information regarding the member institutions' project activities.
3. Planned provisions for sharing information.
4. Ad hoc exchange of personnel and resources for completion of member institution projects.
5. Planned participation on joint projects.
6. Joint development of program budgets and use of pooled resources.
7. Establishment of overlapping board and joint setting of program policies.

These levels of increasing collaboration are fairly generic to any cooperative arrangements between organizations. It is important, however, to recognize that one level of collaborative interaction is not "better" or "worse" than another. Rather, an appropriate collaborative relationship is a function of the shared objectives of the organizations and individuals involved. Typically though, high degrees of collaboration do not occur in the absence of lower collaborative interactions. Many collaborative arrangements start at the project level. As experience is gained in working together, the barriers to further collaboration are reduced.

Because most collaborative interactions are project specific and ad hoc, most collaborative arrangements do not develop to the level of formal integration of programming that exists in PRI. The external Kellogg funding provided the participating institutions the otherwise unavailable opportunity to develop an integrated outreach system. Developmental funding became the "carrot" for change. It allowed initial experimentation without direct cost. The other uncertainties and tensions that accompany change remained.

All of the institutions of higher education involved in PRI have experienced organizational change and redefinition of their outreach functions. This is not to say that such change has been easy. As has been well documented, change within organizations often meets resistance - higher education institutions have proven no different.

In achieving successful collaboration among higher education institutions four necessary conditions must exist. First, and possibly foremost, there must be a personal commitment to collaborative efforts by those involved. While this stems from a value set, there also must be evidence of the second condition - the probability that collaboration can contribute to the accomplishment of the goals of the institution.

Individuals involved in acting as catalysts for building relationships between and among organizational entities can be exposed to considerable professional risks, for they are playing non-traditional roles within their institutions. Therefore, the third essential condition is the existence of a base of support within the institution which can assure professional rewards for those involved and can provide needed institutional resources.

The fourth condition is the establishment of mechanisms for effective inter-institutional communications. Even within organizations, effective communication is a perpetual problem. Both the need for and the difficulty of communication is increased manyfold in an interorganizational collaborative setting. This is particularly true in a multiorganizational endeavor such as PRI. There is an enhanced need for effective communication both within and among the partners.

The necessary conditions for collaboration outlined above are by no means all-inclusive, but for PRI they have proven to be the most important. Of equal importance to the Partnership's success has been its ability to foster collaborative projects at the community level.

Collaboration at the Point of Service Delivery

A unique characteristic of PRI that enables its staff members to act as catalysts for interorganizational collaboration at the community project level is the earned credibility of the program in facilitating collaboration from a neutral

base. Through a non-aligned third party role, the staff can discourage and avoid concerns of turf protection on the part of the other actors. This carefully developed and guarded quality of PRI is one of the most highly valued and effective characteristics of the program.

PRI staff has relied on a facilitative and "resource linker" approach in community project consultations (Lippitt 1973). Working with community representatives to identify acceptable solutions and the resources needed for meeting a community problem, the staff members can call on any number of Partner institution faculty or agency professionals to furnish the expertise needed.

A mode of operation which has been closely associated with this nonadvocacy role is the maintenance of low public visibility for PRI. This strategy has been followed in an effort to boost the visibility of individual partner organizations. This operational style is carried over into strategies for project completion. When working with a community group, PRI staff makes certain that upon the successful completion of the community project, the good will and public visibility accrue to the group, not PRI.

The question of the proper level of visibility for the Partnership has been one of concern throughout its history. Because the individual institutions derive the public recognition from PRI efforts, the probability of their continued participation in the Partnership is strengthened. To that extent, low visibility has had a positive impact. However, low visibility has also contributed to a general lack of awareness of PRI, thus precluding the development of a public base of support for the program. To that extent, low visibility has had a negative impact. The balance of assuring recognition for the partner institutions and agencies, while assuring some visibility for PRI remains a constant program concern.

Aside from the visibility issue, there is no doubt that organizational neutrality has been a major building block of the program. The strength of this approach has been the ability of PRI to create an environment with minimal competitiveness in which agencies and institutions can jointly contribute personnel and other resources in response to the needs identified in rural areas. Sustained participation in the program would be highly unlikely if PRI were aligned with one specific member institution.

Concluding Remarks

As has been noted, a basic assumption undergirding the PRI endeavor has been that cooperation among public service providers would enhance their individual and collective effectiveness in addressing multifaceted rural development issues. In an era of ever-increasing specialization, the initial challenge for PRI was to provide a pragmatic demonstration that collaboration had something to offer. Interorganizational collaboration among PRI partners and its value is now a demonstrated fact. The PRI strategies contributing to this changed behavior have been:

1. Trust building through practicing joint ownership of the program, including budget allocation and program planning.
2. Development of interorganizational contractual agreements to fit varying institutional requirements.
3. An organizationally neutral third party staff position which contributes to the organization, nurture, and maintenance of optimum levels of collaboration.
4. A developmental and flexible organizational design which allows linkage building between public service providers and users, with programming cues originating from the needs of users.
5. Working with individual partners to improve their service delivery capabilities.
6. Provision of communication mechanisms among partners and adoption of a consensus style of group decision making.

PRI's challenge for the future remains one of maintaining support for the Partnership while maintaining a low visibility cooperative approach to rural development.

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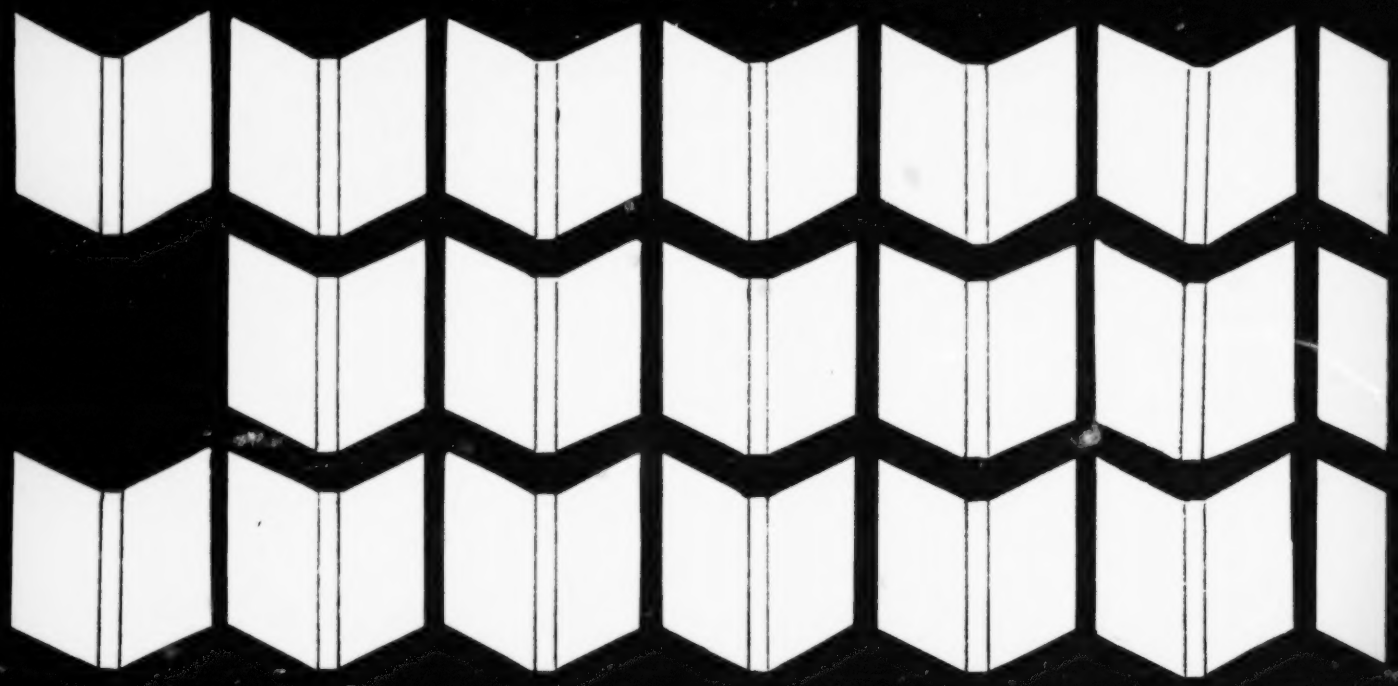

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